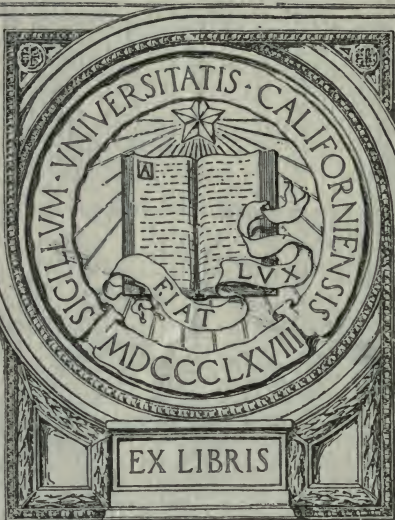




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Yours faithfully,  
S. H. Wilson.

# HOW I BECAME A SOCIALIST

AND OTHER PAPERS

BY

J. STITT WILSON



*AUTOGRAPH EDITION*

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR  
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## A WORD

The pamphlets included in this volume were published at various times during the last four years, 1908-1912, while conducting Socialist propaganda in England and the United States. They were never intended as a connected whole. Some of them were delivered on special occasions, as for instance the "Bible Argument for Socialism," to the Methodist preachers of San Francisco. "How I Became a Socialist" was first printed, red hot, off my tongue, in a little paper published for campaign purposes in England. Before the last copies are exhausted, I have had three hundred sets bound for those who wish to preserve them. A new type of propaganda material will appear as the social revolution proceeds. This has had its place, and such of it as may yet prove useful may be reprinted. I count myself happy to have spoken or written anything, to have had any part however small, in this great hour of human trial and triumph.

J. STITT WILSON.

Berkeley, California,  
September, 1912.

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## How I Became a Socialist.

### I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

I was born in a Wesleyan Methodist home. Both of my parents were devout members of the church. My father was a class-leader and a man of great spiritual power. Our home was often turned into a place of worship and prayer, and the beginnings of what afterwards became churches were organised under our roof. My mother was a woman of great kindness of heart. This was the distinguishing mark of her piety. She was undemonstrative, while my father was one of those men in early Methodism who were said to be "powerful in prayer." They taught me to read the Bible before I could pronounce the words. I recall vividly to this day, the first lesson in the Life of Jesus. It is a singular fact that the first story of Jesus my mother ever taught me was how the ruling classes in the person of Herod sought to kill the young child. The New Testament was opened to my young mind not as a book full of strange and fantastic doctrines, but as containing the records of the wonderful life of a great lover of men. The old family Bible had a few gruesome pictures from which I turned away; but the little black-backed penny New Testament did not have such pictures. One supreme picture was there—of one who loved human beings. I do not wish to convey the idea that I was a "good little boy." I was a hearty, healthy, robust lad, insanely fond of boyish sport, and often victim or aggressor in the rows that were not infrequent in our school-days.

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I soon began to fight with the under-dog, however, and at thirteen years of age I crossed a dead line, in an inward spiritual illumination. At eighteen I was preaching under the direction of the Methodists. Later I entered Northwestern University at Evanston (Chicago) Ill., U.S.A., and became also a student in the theological seminary at the same place. I was regularly ordained as a minister in the Methodist body, my last appointment being in Chicago.

It was during this four years' pastorate in this great industrial centre that my heart and mind were acutely directed to the terrible struggle of the working-classes in the Battle for Bread. I saw this struggle with my eyes. My heart and mind were compelled to the issue involved. These four years were to me a school out of which I came—a Socialist. The experiences I passed through, and the reflections that eventually culminated in my Socialist convictions, I partially uncover in these pages.

### **1.—Three Forces in One.**

Three forces in my life converged into one. These forces were parallel, and indeed like all energies in our human life, met, and touched, and parted, and united again. They were always really one. But I shall place them before you for clearness as three. Human life is not the broken thing we make it by our analysis. It is a unit, however separated its aspects may appear.

**First, then, the facts drove me to Socialism.** The injustices, misery, and wretchedness, and the unequal struggle of the workers against such frightful odds compelled me to study the underlying causes of this social agony—and I became a Socialist.

**Second. I was a student of economics** and sociology, reading, observing, meditating, and this led me to Socialism. Socialism is the social order corresponding to truth in the intellect.

And in the third place I was passing through **a series**

of subjective experiences, experiences of the mind and heart, moral and spiritual growing-pains—and again I became a Socialist. I shall devote a whole pamphlet to this phase of the subject. See Part II).

**The Social and Economic Necessity of Humanity : a Scientific Study of Society : and Spiritual Light combined to make me a Socialist.** I know these three are one. They correspond to the three-fold aspect of human life: physical, intellectual, and spiritual. And so it must be that a Programme which will satisfy human need and abolish human suffering, must be Truth to the Intellect, and Spiritual Release to the heart.

In a penny pamphlet you will not expect me to give you anything like an adequate treatment of any of these aspects. The subject is too extensive. I shall give you but a running outline, with perhaps a fuller treatment of the third element in Part II.

## II.

### EDUCATION BY RAW FACT.

From my earliest recollections my heart had been moved at the sight of human misery, no matter what the cause. And long before I came to Chicago—that citadel of Capitalism—I had heard the cry of the suffering. But it was not until I came face to face with the actual poverty and misery and struggle of the **workers as a class** that the whole horrible tragedy presented itself to my mind as a **social problem**—a thing to be studied, thought out, acted upon **by Society as a whole**, and abolished. Poverty in the **wholesale**—shall I say—had never impressed me. Poverty as a **socially inflicted** curse to be **socially abolished** by radical social reconstruction—that had never come to my mind before.

The very first day I entered upon my pastorate in the heart of that great city, the gaunt spectacle of poverty, stalking amidst abundance like a death-head,

stared me in the face. The church which I served was well-located to be my school of training for Socialism. On one side not far away were the beautiful boulevards, along which the motor cars and glittering equipage of the rich rolled past spacious lawns and magnificent and palatial residences. The north and west was densely populated with artisans and labourers, and eastward, towards the throbbing centre of the metropolis, along the river were the well-known sixteenth, seventeenth, and nineteenth wards—slumdom. Thus the scene of my labours in the city was to me an education in economics. On the other hand, I was spending half of my time at the University in the richest suburb of Chicago, where wealth and luxury were displayed on every hand. This afforded me the other side of the picture.

### 1.—The Industrial Tragedy.

At once the severe contrasts of wealth and poverty were thrust concretely before my consciousness. From home to home I passed among the people in my pastoral work. I knew the wages they received—and—the wages they did not receive. I knew what rents they paid, the cost of living—and—the cost of dying. I knew how the men laboured from early to late. I knew how the wives and mothers toiled. I knew how the children worked.

I can recall to-day the very names and first names of the girls that went to the shops, and mills, and factories—to put in all their days for miserable weekly doles—their lives bitter with hard labour. I saw their faces pale—the roses fade—the step grow weary—and the grave open—to give them—rest. Over many and many such a grave I read the burial service, “The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away,” **when I knew I was reading a lie.** I was accusing the Lord of the crime of Capitalism, and sanctifying that crime with ceremonial babble.

I knew the boys and girls who went forth to fill the places of those who went no longer. I saw their young lives offered on the altar of the gain-god Mammon. I remember little Bob —, who with a bit of charcoal, could sketch the faces of noted men on the flagstones, to the amazement of the bystanders—he darts up a dirty alley at the approach of the policeman who comes to disperse the crowd—the charcoal is dropped—he goes for a dole per week to work for a “merchant prince” who lives on the boulevard far away, whose land-holdings alone, within sound of a gun-shot, are worth two million pounds. I remember Nellie —, who worked in the soap factory of the great benevolent soap makers, known over the world, millionaires. Nellie fainted at one of my meetings one Sunday night. She actually disturbed God’s service with her secular cries, “the soap is heavy—is heavy—too heavy.” The big trays she carried across her body. She died—a suicide—at nineteen. Capitalism was too busy gathering profits from the unpaid labour of the girl who took her place to attend her funeral. . . . (The next morning I read in the papers the account of the charity ball. It took a full column to describe the gorgeous apparel of the charitable dancers). . . . And I remember scores—hundreds of human beings—they march before the eye of memory—people I knew—I hear their cries—beaten, baffled, foot-sore, weary, hungry, depressed, broken-spirited—I see that army—the victims of Capitalism. . . .

I say I saw these contrasts—“wealth a monster gorged ’midst starving populations.” I saw these struggling multitudes. . . .—they were as sheep having no shepherd. . . . perhaps they had shepherds. . . . perhaps. . . .

## **2.—The Great Lie.**

I saw, then, in this school of mine what I have seen ever since, and see to-day, in every great industrial



centre of the world. I saw in this school, where the Firm Face of Fact was teaching me, what I afterwards saw in the slums and working-class districts of London and other English cities—that **a Great Lie was walking the earth, dressed up, disguised, masked by respectability, and accredited by religion—beating to earth the toiling millions, gathering the product of their hard labour, and placing it in the hands that never earned it, and leaving the victims thus bruised and blasted with good advice concerning their broken lives !**

### 3.—The Seal of Fact Set.

I was not a Socialist. I had not yet read a line of Socialist literature. I did not know a Socialist man or woman. I did not know I was in the school of Socialism. I was in the great Human World of Human Fact and Human Struggle. I had no interests to conserve. I had no doctrines to defend as against my brother-men. I was unsophisticated—having no political creed to stand by. I had rich friends, but none to conciliate. I had no God who was dependent on the gifts of the rich with which to carry on his meanings in this world. The itch for prominence in the church had not smitten me. I was passionately fond of study and books, but it had never occurred to me that education was a means of success in life, a ladder by which to rise away from the people. In Part II. I will tell you something else of my mental state. At any rate, what I want to say here is that **the Raw Fact of our present civilisation set like a seal into my open and willing soul.**

I saw people in possession of thousands and millions of wealth, **which I knew they had never earned—never could earn by any means of hand or head.**

I saw the great working-class going in surging, tramping armies to shop, factory, and mill, putting in their youth, and manhood, and any old-age left to them, in unceasing toil. I knew their labour was producing all the bread, building all the houses, making all the machines, and all the products of all machines.



I knew that the whole material of civilisation was the work of their hands.

But I saw that **they were not paid for their labour.** I saw that they were poor in varying degrees of poverty, from the struggle to keep decently above water, to the deep damnation of the submerged. I knew that they never got what their labour produced—"their just reward was stolen"—"the hire of the labourers was kept back by the fraud" of Capitalism, to use a scripture phrase.

**I saw** with mine own eyes that though they built all the houses they were not decently housed; that though they ploughed and reaped in all the fields, and tended all the flocks and herds, that they were not properly fed; that though they wove all the finest fabrics, and stitched all the fair garments, they themselves were miserably clad.

**I saw** my brothers hunt for a job, offer themselves for sale to master after master, in vain, day after day. I helped them hunt. I went with Tom or Mack to "use my influence," and found fifty others looking for the same job. And then I saw the armies of the unemployed.

And **I saw** at such times the storehouses filled with every kind of thing for human need—the stored up product of labour. But "labour" shivered in the street, or crouched in the tenement, or trod foot-sore and weary in the highway—a "drug on the market."

**I saw** the skilled and the highly skilled mechanic sit glum and ill-natured in his home, after his mocked efforts to sell his labour-power, minding the babies, and doing the house-work, while the mother and wife was away in the sweater's den—which was running profitably.

**I saw** the battle, fierce, and unsuccessful of the strikers, like men fighting in a fog or in murky darkness, as they went forth to demand a living wage—**fighting against the most skilfully and strategically organised and compact masters' associations.**

I saw children by thousands answering the call, "Suffer little children to come unto Me," **but when they went it was to be offered on the devouring altars of the Moloch of Profit.** I knew these children by name, I tell you I remember their faces. . . .

I did not know this thing as Capitalism. I had not read the books at first. The book of life—the Tragedy of the Fact—was before me. I saw this panorama: **Millionaires suffocated by their Profits ; gambling with a world's resources, making security for the few and chance for the many ; toiling working-classes, doing the work of the world, scarcely able to make a living ; millions of poverty-stricken ones, snatching for crumbs from the economic struggle—degradation, misery wretchedness, disease, death, and Hell !**

#### 4.—How the Seal Read.

I questioned. I watched. I pondered. I prayed, **The whole thing appeared to me like a devastating fire that must be extinguished ; like an overwhelming deluge, from which the people must be rescued ; like unto a plague whose ravages must be stayed.**

And now I will tell you the first constructive insight that came to me, and gave me some relief, and just in the order of thought in which I received it.

I saw that the people were in this world : that they had to make a "living." They were not angels but men. **They had to get bread** and the necessities and comforts of life.

I saw that the only source of that existence was the **earth, the land,** and its raw gifts : And I saw that these could not be attained without **labour,** nor made available without **machinery.**

I saw that there was a struggle for existence among us living men. And that that struggle resolved itself into a fierce competition to get control of the **earth, the machinery, and the opportunities to labour.**

I saw that my brothers and sisters, old and young,

were very unequal in that struggle. And I saw that the **whole base of supplies**—the cupboard, as it were—the land and machinery—was open to **private ownership** of the man or men who could win it, and not by labour, but by “financiering,” **by the game of high finance.**

And then I saw that the only possible outcome of such a struggle was, that after a fierce competitive contest, with the losers falling like wheat before the sickle—never to rise—I saw that the **few**—powerful cunning, able, unscrupulous, ruthless, and reckless, loving gold and power, forgetting God and man—that **these must inevitably win**, and become the owners, the controllers, the disposers of the whole base of supplies by which the whole mass of the people must live and labour. That’s what I saw. And I reeled at the thought.

**Capitalism revealed itself to me as a ghastly and unforgivable crime against humanity. For the uttermost tyranny possible to a human being, compelled to live by labour, is to control the means of labour (his bread and labour), which is his very blood and life.** I shuddered at the appalling curse that modern society inflicted upon itself. I saw the whole commercial world and the Battle for Bread and Labour clear through—a gigantic gamble with the land and machinery and products of labour as the stake—I saw the few triumphant winners far in the lead, an irresponsible, godless, inhuman plutocracy—and when I looked again it was a gamble with the very bodies and souls of my fellow-creatures ! And I rose up and cursed it . . . . !

**The death-head that confronted me on the first day I entered upon that Chicago pastorate was interpreted. IT WAS CAPITALISM.**

I was not yet a Socialist. I did not quite know myself as such. These lessons had not been taught to me by books and teachers. **The irresistible, all-compelling Seal of Fact had stamped itself deeply, indelibly into my soul.** And I was reading the lettering thereof. And as

I read that Seal, I uttered in my words what the great Socialist teachers had taught long before in their much clearer phrase. The Raw Fact was doing its work in my being.

Soul and Fact were meeting each other. The need of an oppressed, outraged, and defrauded class, seen, felt, and known, was making me a Socialist.

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### III.

#### **THE SOCIALIST CRITICISM OF CAPITALISM.**

So far in my story I have told you how Raw Fact wrought upon my consciousness and made me a Socialist.

In Part II., under another cover, I shall tell you how the facts of modern civilisation deepened and widened my moral and spiritual convictions. I shall tell you how my soul revolted against Capitalism: not only against its injustice and cruelty and social tyranny, but against its ideals, its business maxims, its morals and its religion, which condoned and bulwarked the system. And I shall tell you how this revolt against Capitalism worked its way to a new constructive insight into the meaning of the personal life in relation to the Social Movement.

#### **1.—History, Sociology, and Political Economy.**

The second element, during these four years, that made me a Socialist was the study of history, sociology, and political economy.

During the first year of my Chicago pastorate, the facts I have narrated were my great instructor. It was only natural that feeling as I did I should be drawn to study particularly the great Social Problem thus thrust before me. With avidity and patience I turned to all available literature on the subject. I began to read history in a new light—paying less heed to the story of strutting princes, as they appeared and disappeared



upon the stage of life, and more heed to the chronicles of the common life, the story of labour, the history of the working classes, and the accounts of great social revolutions, which made for the freedom and emancipation of man.

Through the heavy volumes of sociology I waded, following the pages, now of this author, now of that, in the varying interpretation of the stream of human events. Political economy, "the dismal science," also claimed my attention. And here I ought to relieve my college instructors from any charge that they converted me to Socialism. The very opposite was the case. In political economy my professors were "sound," the text-books used were properly stale with orthodoxy, defining and justifying the Capitalist system. And if ever I could have been saved from Socialist error, my head professor in sociology would have been the man to do it. He was thoroughly anti-democratic. He had a contempt for the working classes, and a fawning devotion to the privileged and powerful. He was strictly "class-conscious." He could not conceive of industry being conducted in any way **except by millionaire profit-mongers or petty competing business men.** I cannot recall that I ever heard him advocate a single progressive, reconstructive, social principle. He was a most faithful servant to his capitalist masters.

## **2.—The Socialist Light Bursts.**

However, I escaped the snare. I ransacked the library shelves, and with my own interpretation of the facts, as I have given it to you, as a working hypothesis, I soon began to see the glimmer of the Socialist light through all the pages. **And then came the great Socialist literature itself, like a balm to the aching mind, like dawn after darkness, like springs of water in a desert, like a breath of fresh air after suffocation.** Here the intellect found rest. One of the great sociologists



says, that perhaps the highest desire of the human consciousness is the desire for Truth, and the highest joy of the human mind is the Discovery of Truth, the perception of principles. So the vision of the Truths of Socialism has been to many a Socialist, as it was to me, an intellectual ecstasy, for I had found the Truth that would make the people Socially Free. **I had found the political and economic programme that was the incarnation of my moral and spiritual passion to set the working-class free from the social bondage in which I saw them to be enslaved.**

A full presentation of Socialist political economy can be found in scores of books and pamphlets published by the Socialist Press throughout the world. Therefore it is not necessary for me to present in detail my principles and convictions. However I may differ in my points of emphasis, or methods of presentation, I am in full agreement with the fundamental declarations of Socialism as held by Socialists the world over.

### **3.—Political Economy—A Short Lesson.**

The word "economy" is derived from two Greek words which mean "the law or method of keeping house." **And Political Economy is therefore the Science of National Housekeeping.** That is to say: Here is a certain area of land; with its resources of coal, iron, crops, pasturage, farms, sites, etc., with a certain increasing equipment of machinery. This area is populated by so many millions of people. Now, Political Economy or the Science of Economics asks this question: How can these millions of people utilise this land, use the machinery, put forth their labour-power, in order to guarantee each and everyone access to the use of the land and machinery, that each may labour and provide himself and his family with the necessities and comforts and satisfactions of life. The question is: **How to give freedom to all; prevent the few from controlling the many; give to each approxi-**

**mately the product of his toil as his private property ; and prevent some from securing for their own private property that for which they have not laboured.**

Surely this is a plain and fair question, and in face of the facts, as I have cited them, it is an imperative question.

As a matter of fact, then, Socialism points out that the present Capitalist system, instead of being a system of True Economy, is really a system of awful Waste—not only a waste of land, and a waste of mechanical power, and a waste of products, but, worst of all, **a tragic waste of human energy and human lives.**

#### **4.—The Socialist Criticism of Capitalism.**

Socialism points out that the **land** is fertile and abundant, capable of being the source of satisfaction for all physical human needs :

That **machinery** with its Titanic might of steam and electricity has vastly multiplied the possibilities of man to turn the raw gifts of nature into the finished products for use and enjoyment.

Socialism points out that **no working-class** in the history of the world **ever worked so faithfully, so efficiently, and so productively**, as the working-class of the present Capitalist System. The slave under the master's whip could never be as punctual, painstaking, and trustworthy, as the modern factory operative. Hunger and necessity, and the Bread Battle of Free Labour, are more powerful compellers than slave-drivers' whips.

I saw that the **product of labour** was increasing to incalculable limits—corn, bread, meat, clothing, shoes, houses, furniture, machinery, etc.,—such a product of human toil is past the dream of our fathers. The store-houses were filled, and the trains rushed over the land and ships tracked all the seas, laden with the products of human toil——

And yet—and yet——

And yet—what ?

**And yet I saw the working-classes, whose labour had produced this colossal mass of things for human satisfaction—I saw them in comparative poverty, and in a constant, unremitting struggle for a decent existence.**

**Socialism declares that the fabulous fortunes of the rich are built up out of the unpaid labour of the working-class.**

And I saw that out of this very surplus in the hands of the Capitalist Class—a surplus that should have gone into the hands that earned it, the Capitalist Class bought and owned and used for their still further private enrichment and profit, the land and the machinery, which was the only resource by which the working-class could live and labour.

I saw that the **very faithfulness of the working-class tended to** more quickly fill the markets of the world with the products of their toil—a product so extensive that their small wages could not buy it back—and thus their very efficiency drove multitudes of their class to unemployment—a pretty economy this—!

### **5.—Security for the Few—Chance for the Many.**

I saw that Capitalism guaranteed comparative security in private property to the capitalist class, **to the men that could win it in the Competitive Game ;** and, on the other hand, I saw that Capitalism gave no guarantee or security of private property to the worker in the natural product of his labour.

The greater part of the product of the labour of the working-class went direct and first-hand to those who could **win it in the gamble of Capitalism,** or to those who controlled the tools and machinery and land, on which and with which the workers worked.

**I saw that the worker was neither guaranteed the chance to utilise his labour, nor to receive the earnings of his labour when he did work.** His chances to labour depended on whether the Capitalist class could make

a profit out of his energy. If the employing class could do this then they would hire him. If they could not profit on his labour-power, then he might join the army of the unemployed!

How is that for economy of human energy?

**The present system is the best industrial system for enriching the few out of the natural earnings of the working-class that has ever existed in human history.**

## **6.—The Workers Divided at the Ballot Box.**

To cap this climax of the fraud upon the true and natural private property that should accrue to the working-class, **the brains of the workers were addled by Capitalist politicians and teachers in press and pulpit**, so that they believed that such a system was almost "ordained of God." When Socialists propose that a system of industry to be just should prevent the Capitalist class from absorbing the true earnings of the working-class, these devotees at the shrine of the Gain-gods cry out, "Stop thief!" To protest against Capitalism's robbery is called a "vile political creed" and "atheism."

And one set of politicians declare for certain minor changes in the system, and the other party declares for certain other minor changes in the system, but **neither of them declare for any fundamental change** which might interfere with the profits and winnings of the Capitalist class.

And thus the workers are divided into two hostile political camps, and no matter which camp wins, **the Capitalist class always wins, remains in the saddle, and continues to exploit the working-class.**

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## IV.

### **CONSTRUCTIVE PRINCIPLES.**

Now if you will look straight at this system of Capitalism you will see the **basic wrong** of the whole system, from which all its injustices arise.



You remember Victor Hugo's story of the devil-fish ; how the monster put forth one tentacle after another and coiled it around his victim : how the hero recalled that there was but **one vulnerable spot** in his brute enemy ; how at the strategic moment he struck a blow at that spot, and the terrible demon of the deep shuddered, released his grasp, and fell dead.

### 1.—The Grip of Capitalism.

Capitalism is a monster seizing the body politic. One tentacle is put forth to grasp the major part of the earnings of the working-class : another has seized the working-woman : another reaches forth to the child : another has fastened upon Government and made that the instrument of the powerful classes : still another has turned the pen of the journalist into a weapon by which the injustice of Capitalism is praised and defended : and still another has seized the pulpit, silenced those who profess to speak for God and man, or turned their phrases into open apology and defence for the Crime of Capitalism !

But there is one vulnerable spot in Capitalism. If the working-class of the world can see that spot and strike they shall be free.

**The fundamental wrong, the basic Injustice of the Capitalist System, is that the resources of land and machinery, to which ALL THE PEOPLE must have access, in order to live and labour, are owned by THE FEW, and are conducted by the few for PRIVATE PROFIT.**

The workers must live : they have no resources but their Labour-Power : this Labour-Power they must sell by day or week to the employing class, **not for what that labour-power can produce**, but for whatever it will bring as a mere commodity in a crowded labour-market.



## 2.—What Socialism Proposes.

It is necessary to point out with much repetition this fundamental wrong of Capitalism in order to see clearly that Socialism is the only possible programme that will meet that wrong.

Since the fundamental wrong of Capitalism is that the **few** own the Resources of living and run them for **Private Profit**, Socialism proposes that the Basic Industrial Equipment shall be **Socially or Collectively Owned** and **Democratically** organised in the interests of the whole people.

Socialism would thus guarantee employment to every citizen.

It would produce things on a large scale for **use** rather than for **profit**.

These things would be sold at **cost of production**, plus the needs of social administration.

The hours of labour would be reduced.

The wages of all would be greatly raised.

And the purchasing power of these wages would be greatly increased ; because production on such a large scale would decrease cost of production, and the enormous profits of landowners and capitalists would be eliminated, and the great wastes of competing manufacturers and middlemen would be at an end.

As a result of the **Collective Ownership** of the basic equipment of industry, such as railways, steamships, collieries, land, shops, mills, mines, markets, stores, etc., etc., there would be a greater amount of **private property** possible to each worker than ever before in human history. **But no individual could accumulate and control as private property, the machinery or resources on which other people depended for existence.**

Everyone would be secure in the opportunity to work.

There would be no Capitalist exploiters to abstract his earnings.

Goods produced cheaply would make his labour go a long way.

The incentive to make a good living and to multiply the comforts and satisfactions of life, would be operative for all. The incentive to control public resources while people starved—might be operative—but could not find scope.

**The net result would be an increase of comfort and happiness, of freedom, independence, and well-being for all.** The present Social Problem would be met and solved, and the race launched on its next Great Freedom from ignorance and servitude. **Socialism is the hope of the world.**

### **3.—Concluding Words.**

Every great revolution in human history passes through four stages. The Socialist movement is passing through these four stages in different minds and different nations.

**First, men begin to awake to a sense of the wrongs and injustices from which they suffer.** It is almost unbelievable how long a suffering class can endure social injustice without protest. For a long, long time wrongs that later stand out glaringly, are patiently endured. Nay, more, the modern proletariat has actually been grateful to the master-class for conditions, which, in the light of Justice, are social outrages. Witness the half-time system. The workers are blinded by the darkness of Capitalism and played as pawns in the political game. The slave-spirit leads them to flock to the standards of their masters, if perchance a little glory of the leaders may fall upon them. Then comes some acute injustice, and an awakening follows. For nearly fifty years now there has been a growing revolt on the part of the working-class. The Trade Union movement was the first organised expression of this revolt against Capitalism. Many a hard-fought battle of the trade unions, many a crushing defeat has been necessary in order to weld them into the first elements of class-consciousness. Evils taken as a matter of course

begin to be analysed, and revolt becomes more or less intelligent. The workers protest against long hours, low wages, unemployment, sweating, bad housing, social degradation, and the general poverty and widespread misery in human society. The first stage is a protest against wrongs and injustices as **effects**. Individual capitalists, landlords, or corporations are singled out for attack for their greed and ruthlessness over human life. The remedies sought and applied are near at hand. Almost always they are temporary and ineffectual. Every advance is a compromise. The real evils continue, and with the growing sensitiveness of human life in modern times, evils are more deeply felt. This poverty and misery of the working-class, especially in religious England and America, is something appalling. One might wonder how statesmen can sleep in the midst of it.

Then the second stage is entered upon. **From dealing with effects they turn to causes.** It was inevitable that some movement, reflective, philosophical, radical, even revolutionary, should be precipitated out of the unrest of the last half century. That movement might have been called by any name. It has arisen and is called the International Socialist Movement. Socialism is the great interpreter of the fundamental **cause** of our social and industrial injustice and the degradation and slavery of the masses. The suffering of the workers, secreted as it were a brain. That brain is Socialism. This leaven becomes directive and constructive, not only to the whole working-class, but through them to the whole of civilization.

The third stage follows: As soon as the cause is clearly perceived, the fundamental principle of the New Order appears. Socialism points out that, since **private ownership of social resources**, and private administration of social production for private profit, is the one supreme cause of the present enslavement of the working-class, therefore the Social Principle that must be applied to industry is **Social or Collective**

**Ownership of the basic social resources** of the people's life and labour, and democratic organisation and administration of social production for Social Use, instead of for Private Profit: that Co-operation must take the place of Competition and Private Monopoly: **that Private Property in the product of one's labour can only be secured by making the social means of labour into Social or Collective Property.**

**The last stage is the Class-Struggle in its acute form.** The working-class grasp the New Principle, and proceed to put it into Social and Industrial operation.

In this stage all previous stages concentrate. The evils from which the working-class suffer are recounted, and vividly uncovered to the consciousness. The cause of these evils is stated with irresistible definiteness. The new Principle is made a political watchword. And the workers, forsaking all other political parties of their Capitalist exploiters, rally to the polls as a class-conscious body, elect their own representatives to go to borough and city councils, and national parliaments, to put the **New Principle of Social Organisation into complete realisation.**

In this pamphlet I have sought principally to awaken the consciousness of my readers to the wrongs of Capitalism, and to state the fundamental cause of these wrongs, and point out the New Principle.



# How I Became a Socialist.

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## I.

### **THE CHURCH AND SOCIALISM.**

No man can live in the closing years of the nineteenth and the opening years of the twentieth century without becoming poisoned with the Capitalistic Spirit, or liberated by the Socialist Spirit, to some degree more or less. I have told you (Part I.) in what manner the facts of Capitalism wrought upon me to make me a Socialist. I shall now tell you something of the religious, spiritual, or psychological experiences through which I passed, and how these experiences eventually birthed me into Socialism.

You will need to read between the lines, and to complete to some extent the avenues of thought to which I may project you. I wish to be perfectly frank, and yet I cannot tell all. The soul shudders to expose itself. I shall tell you enough to appeal to similar meanings in your own case, even though the accidents of heredity or environment may greatly differ. We are all children of this age, and we can reduce nearly all of our life meanings to the same common denominator.

There came a time in my life when consent to live at peace with the present Capitalist System of Industry and Life and Feeling, without making active and intelligent protest, would have been to me moral suicide and a total eclipse of the ultimate meaning of existence ; and, on the other hand, the espousal of the Socialist Cause, with all that it carries for the human race, was to me a birth into a new world of spiritual significance, which becomes increasingly luminous and emancipating. Moral conviction and spiritual illumination led me straight to Socialism.



## **1.—The Church not Responsible for My Socialism.**

It is needless to say that I never heard any Socialism in my father's prayers. Nor did my mother's piety disclose to me teachings in political economy, as such. Nor did I ever hear even the faintest echo of a Socialist proposition in all my teachings that I listened to in my youth and early manhood. I heard men called to "good works," to "charity," to "help the poor," and to "give" to benevolent and charitable institutions, **but I never heard a minister of the gospel deal with poverty as a social problem—a socially-inflicted curse to be socially abolished.** Their call was to benevolence, philanthropy, and charity **within the present Capitalist System** : it was not a call to change the system.

I entered the theological school. I studied under some of the greatest church scholars and teachers in America. These men taught under the very shadow of Capitalism enthroned in one of its mighty citadels—Chicago. I never heard one of them present the cause of the people in all they ever taught me. According to these great men the slums needed "evangelisation" and "city missions." They felt dimly that the working-class was not reached by the church—it was the godlessness, and beer-drinking, and pleasure-seeking of the masses.

I am ready to acknowledge that I learned much from those great scholars and fathers, but **I never received from a single one of them a single hint to show that there was any great Social Problem, or Injustice which the working-class suffered under Capitalism, or any industrial oppression or wrong from which they should be emancipated.**

I studied the Greek New Testament, church history, theology and allied studies. But not one word did I ever hear about the struggle of the people under Capitalism to-day or a possible way out. My teachers and examiners would acknowledge that I knew my theology and church history and the rest. There were

three volumes of Christian theology with which at that time I was so familiar that I could close my eyes and turn the pages one by one and give the substance of the main thought on each page. Had there been therein a single inspiring or definite consideration of **the relation of Christianity to the Wrongs and Injustices of Capitalism**, or any proposal whatever to deal with these injustices, surely I would have known it.

The theological school was not my instructor in Socialism except by way of negation, and they should not be held accountable.

## **2.—Nor the Great Preachers and Evangelists.**

Nor did the great preachers, evangelists, elders, or bishops of the church influence me toward Socialism. I never heard or read a single syllable from these leaders **which impeached Capitalism as an unrighteous or un-Christian social system.**

When I began to take an active part in the labour movement in Chicago—a very moderate activity—the preachers looked askance at me. With perhaps one or two exceptions I never received the slightest sympathy or good cheer from any of them. When it was reported to the higher church authorities of the well-to-do members of my church that I was preaching one sermon on the Labour Question each month, and holding a mass-meeting of working men to discuss the problems of Labour on Friday nights in the church, my bishop (presiding-elder) wrote me a letter of severe chastisement. He wanted to know if I was going to be a loyal methodist, and was amazed at my youthful stupidity in thinking that I could learn anything about the Labour Problem by gathering a mass of work-people into my church to “talk” about it. He warned me that to do this in order to get light on the Social Problem was like “hunting rabbits with a brass band.” One of the higher officials who had known me in some of my spiritual hungers and searchings, **expressed the**

**fear that my soul was lost**, for no other reason than that I had sought to apply my spiritual vision to "set at liberty the people that are bruised."

The great orators of the church were inspired by themes that suited well the richest congregations, themes and treatment that **never made the souls of millionaires the least uneasy about the system in which their ill-gotten gains were gathered, out of the "hire of the labourers which was kept back."**

I attended the greatest "evangelistic" efforts and camp-meetings conducted for the express purpose of producing "the highest type of New Testament piety." **But the conversion preached, the sanctification experienced, with rapt joy and exultation, and the consequent piety practised, was wholly at peace with the present unjust, unholy, unchristian Capitalist System.**

To these "Holiness" teachers, the social system was good enough—indeed, was never mentioned. The supreme effort was to bring individual egos, or souls, to certain subjective experiences, and to certain corresponding virtues—experiences and virtues which were quite at home in the Capitalist System. **They never once questioned the right or justice, or consistency of Capitalism with the mind or spirit of Jesus.**

Not the religion of Pharisees and hypocrites, nor the lowest church-going piety, but the most aggressive and earnest piety, of preachers and people was at peace with Capitalism.

I went to these places intensely seeking light and spiritual power. But those who taught and those who sought "the highest standard of New Testament piety" by prayer and fasting never once questioned the Industrial System, which to me was the modern Anti-Christ.

### **3.—Capitalistic Religion.**

If Capitalism could succeed in throttling the Socialist Movement, and ride rough-shod over a despairing and

enslaved working-class, perpetuating the social robbery of the people, I have no doubt that the leaders and dignitaries of the churches, protestant and catholic, would boast of the sublime efforts they had put forth to withstand the "vile political creed of Socialism," and they would tell of how God blessed them, and they would claim the victory over Socialism as theirs.

But if Capitalism is abolished and Socialism is triumphant, I have no doubt that the ecclesiastical leaders will claim the victory as theirs. So has it been through the centuries. They have defended despotism and fawned on tyrants, and bolstered up decaying social systems, as long as these have lasted ; and then when the Lord of Life in Human History, the Spirit and Passion of Democracy, arose in spite of priest-craft, and state-craft, and mammon-worship, the church has glorified herself as the guardian-angel of Democracy ! And so we may see it again !

Well, I ought to thoroughly absolve the church from any responsibility in my education as a Socialist. I ought to acknowledge also that wherever I have gone over the world heralding Socialism, the clergy have seen to it that they were in no way connected with such a "base and ignoble mission" as mine.

Not in her theology, not in her interpretation of social morality, not from the lips of her great orators, teachers, officials, or evangelists did I receive Socialism. **Socialism was to them anti-Christ. Capitalism, which their religion and morals condoned, was to me the Anti-Christ.**

#### 4.—My Soul and Capitalism.

If, then, I tell you in these pages how my soul sought the Living Spirit That Is, and how in my seekings I was led to Socialism, it was only as my very being burst through and escaped the old that I was born into a new ethical and spiritual meaning to Life which is the anti-thesis of Capitalism, and runs at least parallel to, and



finds expression in, the great world-wide Socialist Movement.

If devotion to the God of the Church means the defence of Capitalism, as it apparently does, then must I be adjudged infidel to that God and that church. And this not on the ground of mere opinion, but from the deepest depths of all I know to be my soul or spiritual consciousness.

For my uttermost spiritual light declares to me that Capitalism is a wolf that devours the sheep: Capitalism is Mammonism socially and religiously enthroned: it is the modern Pharaoh, making the lives of the people bitter with hard bondage.

From the robed dignitaries of ritualism or from the uniformed leaders of the Salvation Army, or from any sect between these two extremes, **we have no authoritative utterance that impeaches Capitalism in the name of Christ.** Capitalism as a Social System is secure from such attack. Capitalism which to my soul is Anti-Christ—is defended, supported and blessed by modern Christianity.

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## II.

### BIOGRAPHICAL.

#### 1.—Earlier Experiences.

I shall roughly sketch the main elements of my experience which preceded and finally culminated in the Socialist consciousness. I commit the account to type because I believe it contains some **universal elements** in the present great social and moral and religious **revolution** on which the whole world has entered; because I believe it voices the feelings of many others who are passing through similar experiences.

When I was a lad about thirteen years of age I had an illumination arising from some remote areas of my being, which in the light of later reflection, appears to me to have been a natural, normal expression of the

“Socialization of Personality.” Is not every human being the Son of Man—the Soul of the Race incarnate? And if it were not for the dead hand of artificialities and conventions, of dead doctrines, customs, and institutions, and private-property ideas, upon the very soul of childhood, would not the Son of Man appear as the normal thing in human consciousness? Does not this suggest also the true education that is yet to be—**education through original inspiration.** The first distinct release of my soul, the memory of which still brings me to silence and tears, **was a leading away of my mind from merely personal concerns and feelings to larger human and cosmic interests.**

## **2.—I Enter the Ministry.**

The next epochal period of my life came when I finally decided to enter the ministry in the Methodist church. I was a schoolmaster, had been for a period with a law firm, and felt drawn to the lecture platform. My decision finally to become a Methodist preacher grew out of the fact that I was already preaching while yet teaching, and that seemed the most natural direction for my social consciousness to take.

In this crisis there was presented to me for reflection and decision what had been as it were intuitively forced upon me in the earlier experience to which I have referred. The question really was this: Whether my life was to be lived in following after private interests and personal ambitions, or devoted to human service. Whether there was now to be a larger Socialization of Personality in my case or not was now a question that I must now decide. **It must be voluntary, a choice, a decision, an act of the will.**

The whole meaning of righteousness was not a matter of opinions or theories, or the development of certain private virtues, or the fulfilling of certain religious duties: but whether my mind and heart and very soul should cease from merely personal values and private

advantages, material or religious, and become a centre and organ of values and advantages for humanity.

When the **will** finally functioned the human interest and the welfare of men and renounced the private interests, I entered into a singular exaltation of my whole being. The missionary spirit fell upon me, and has never left me. I began to apply myself to my studies with intense zeal in order to secure the weapons for my warfare, and with a quiet happiness I knew I was in some way "not my own," but the servant of my brother men.

### **3.—Another Crisis.**

The second year after entering the theological seminary, I became alarmed at the species of paralysis that had fallen upon my moral energies and spiritual enthusiasm. After reflecting over the matter, I left the Institute and went away to a small country pastorate, and there gave myself up to prayer and meditation, and service to the people, looking for Light and seeking for Truth. After a long period of waiting, I was again birthed into a still deeper Socialization of Personality.

All other meanings to life seemed to be eclipsed. It was not now a question of balancing private interests and personal aims against human interests and social aims. The question before me at this time was how totally and utterly life might be made the organ and instrument and agent of Universal Good, of the Kingdom of God in the Earth. It was at this time that I received the insight concerning the Personal Experience of Jesus which I have treated in my pamphlet on that subject.

And here also in this isolated country village my mind received its first distinct illumination concerning the social and economic and industrial significance of the deepest spiritual experience.

I began to see that the Life of the Free Spirit must

find an expression in economic facts, and that economic relations do register spiritual and moral relationships.

I began to see that our relations in the struggle for a livelihood with material resources are the primary and fundamental measure of human association, indicating its justice or injustice, its heaven or its hell.

Here, then, I received the inner Fire of Truth, which broke into a flame when in Chicago, a year or so later, I confronted the oppressions of Capitalism.

#### **4.—The Soul's Revolt Against Capitalism.**

My earlier religious experiences I have related in order to show you the state of mind in which I was introduced to the ravages of the Capitalist System of industry. You will have observed that the illuminations and enlargements of my consciousness were not created by pondering over doctrines or suffering in my conscience over certain vile sins. **The release of my soul was precipitated out of the Will in relation to other human lives.**

The question was how my interests and my will concerning those interests should be related to human interests and human welfare.

It is true I had subscribed to the doctrines of Methodism, but these I had inherited, as it were. I had reflectively considered them as a series of propositions and decided that they were the Truth. I probably made them carry my spiritual freightage for the time being. However, the revolt of my soul was not so much against any set of doctrines or dogmas. **My revolt was against the actual practices, the real life, the social and business and economic structure and operation of civilisation, which embodied and expressed the actual beliefs of the people whatever their theories or doctrines or professions were.**

Capitalism is not simply a certain mode of owning land and machinery and hiring wage-labour. Capitalism is a plexus of social ideals, of commercial ethics, of



business maxims. **Capitalism is a mental atmosphere** of notions of success, of class feelings, pseudo-aristocratic and anti-democratic—in short, Capitalism is, as Karl Marx taught, not only the economic basis of present society, but the whole superstructure, of morals, religion, art, and life, coloured and cursed by correspondence to that false economic basis. **Against this whole fabric my soul revolted.**

### 5.—The Chicago Pastorate.

I went to the Chicago pastorate with my consciousness partially socialized, as I have indicated. And the very first day, in making my pastoral calls, my soul broke into open revolt against Capitalist Society. I could relate to you in detail to this very day the facts of Social Injustice that confronted me. I had no name for the thing I saw, nor had I ever heard intelligently of Socialism. The facts began to march and countermarch before me. **It seemed as if that procession were marshalled by death-heads and generalled by devils.**

Little children imprisoned in bleak, unfriendly streets and lanes, running in and out of miserable dens, cynically called "homes"; youths and maidens hurried off in the early morning to shops, factories, and mills—women, old and young, fighting in the bread-battle, offering their labour on the world-market—the armies of men, skilled and unskilled, pouring out the blood of their labour-power into the mills of the gain-gods, there to be ground into the rich coin of the fortune-makers—old-age, beaten, baffled, still struggling on, compelled to live though dead—and back and forth, and up and down and in and out of this procession of struggling humanity there flashed in high lights the burnished armour, the proud equipage, the gaudy splendour, the untold luxury, the glittering grandeur of wealth—"A monster gorged, 'midst starving population" . . . . And my soul revolted. . . . **My Soul Revolted !**

## III.

**"TOWARDS DEMOCRACY."**

I had never been an aristocrat in this incarnation. That goes without saying. So when this procession of Mammon and the other Gain-Gods, the plunderers and the plundered, marched before me, with the death-head on the flag, I had no artificial barriers to get across in order to feel that my lot was not with the **bruisers** but with the **bruised**. I did not have to descend to meet my brothers and comrades of the working-class. Any artificial aristocracy that might have poisoned my life had received a powerful antidote in the Socialization of my Consciousness to which I have referred. **And the first outcome of my soul's touch with this hideous Social Injustice of the Capitalist World was to give me a deep but undefined unity of consciousness with the humanity that suffered under that injustice.**

**1.—The New Wine.**

The categories of my religious experience and teaching expanded and then burst with the New Wine of Truth that poured in.

**Righteousness** began to mean more than the deepest kind of personal virtue or isolate goodness. **It meant also right social and industrial relations**—and that seemed impossible to Capitalism.

**Justice** I saw could not be measured out by the most generous judge in the courts of law. **The whole civilisation was unjust—it was grounded in injustice.** I remember how ridiculous it once appeared to me to see men adding up accounts and testing and stamping weights and measures, and "making the balance just," when I knew that the whole society was a gigantic gamble with commodities and with the human beings whose labour-power was the basis of it all! **A just balance! Fie!**

I had read and studied the **Holiness** literature. A

sullen grief seized me when I found that the holiness expounders and leaders had never once reflected on the **un-holiness of the whole Social fabric** in which they taught. They were defenders of the system—the **highest type of spiritual police.**

**Holiness !** I saw the whole body sick and diseased from head to foot, “full of wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores,” as old Isaiah said long ago, and for the same reason. “The hands of the mighty were full of blood.” There could be no **holiness** for me that was not an antagonism to Capitalism, and a social reconstruction and an industrial renovation—a “seeking of Justice and relief of the oppressed.”

I saw **coveteousness, which is idolatry**, glorified, and its blood-bespattered gifts received into the treasuries of the church. I saw the Mammon-god winked at and consent given that God and Mammon could be worshipped without conscientious scruples—Jesus to the contrary notwithstanding.

I saw that it was acknowledged as just, and urged as a virtue, and praised as a practice, to “lay up treasure on earth, where interest and profit and rent doth accumulate.”

**Missions for Jesus' sake** were carried on with great success, heavily financed by the profit-mongers, and actually conducted by men deep in the financial game—men on whom it never once dawned that conversion to Christ could mean any conviction whatever concerning social wrongs and industrial injustice.

I heard it boasted that souls of working-class men and women, under deep religious conviction, had made restitution of the fares they had avoided to pay to tram companies and railways. But I never heard of any accusation of the tramway bandits that had plundered tens of thousands of pounds of profits annually out of the pockets of the working-class—to say nothing of any restitution of their ill-gotten gains. Nor did I ever hear any accusation in New Testament terms of those who had “heaped treasure out of the hire of the

labourers, which was by the profit-seekers kept back by fraud."

And as that procession of human beings, marshalled under the death-head flag of "**Profit ! Profit !! Profit !!!**" passed before me, my soul revolted.

My soul revolted against the injustice of Capitalism's imagined injustice ; against the unrighteousness of its righteousness ; and against the unholiness of its holiness that could be at peace with such almost unforgivable social wrongs ; against the un-Christian Christianity that administered the sacrament of Him who "laid down His life for the sheep" to a civilisation that "laid down the sheep for the fleece."

My soul revolted against Capitalism. In my Conscience it was written, "**Now is the judgment of this Competitive System ; now is the Prince of this Capitalist Age judged.**"

## 2.—Constructive Insight.

Revolt is only one aspect of the soul's movement for a new social order. And so it was in my case. Had I been born a Hebrew or a Hindoo this awakening of the Social Conscience within me might have taken its colour and interpretation from the religion of Jehovah or Brahm. But being raised a Christian, my religious inheritance was the New Testament and the Life and Teaching of Jesus. As I have told you, I had already been pushed to deep soul-experiences which had been more or less interpreted in New Testament terms, rather than in Theological terms—terms of Life rather than of Dogma. I now began to ponder and pray and struggle for light as I had never done before. Light I had to have. The religious and spiritual light that could be at peace with Capitalism was to me—darkness. "If the **light** that is in thee be **darkness**, how great is that darkness." I could never expose the struggle my soul went through. But I shall briefly run over some of the main points of light which broke as morning stars



upon my consciousness, and which have since deepened and clarified and unified.

### **3.—The Social Teaching of Jesus.**

As the injustice of Capitalism, and the misery of the poor, and the unrighteousness of the present social order, pressed upon me, and as I found no spiritual response, or human rest, in religious teaching that ran along at the heels of Capitalism's juggernaut procession, I turned to the Spirit of Truth within me and to a deeper and more penetrating search for Light from the Life and Teaching of Jesus than existing religion offered.

And the first thing that deeply impressed me was the **social and economic significance of the Teachings of Jesus**. I cannot here elaborate what I mean by this, for I am stating convictions briefly. The Sermon on the Mount I saw was a code of social duties, so to speak, a revelation of the fundamental principles of Social Justice and human fellowship for this our every-day world. Such a passage as that beginning with the phrase, "No man can serve two masters," is nothing short of a brief but comprehensive Social Program. It is almost impossible to find in the whole Sermon on the Mount anything that could give an ecclesiastical or theological colour to these sayings. They are ethical, moral, social. There is actually an emphatic warning in the sixth chapter against the public exhibition of the least **formal religiousness**. And later He insists on actual living "fruits" as the only proof or indication that a life is the life of goodwill and brotherhood. If a tree has leaves and fruit on it in due season why does it need a sign up that it is living and bearing?

When we come to even the more mystical teaching in the Gospel of John, we find that instead of the Social significance being modified, it is intensified. **The ultimate and only test of discipleship is Love.** "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples that ye

love one another as I have loved you. He prays that they all may be one. He says : " I lay down my life for the sheep. Therefore doth the Father love me." " And as the Father hath sent me even so send I you," to be social redeemers of humanity, feeding your life away to the flock. " He that saveth his life shall lose it, but he that loseth his life shall save it." Every man of them was to re-duplicate the Christ-Spirit for the race according to the needs of his generation.

When he depicts the judgment of persons and churches and nations and political parties, there is not a single word about beliefs, doctrines, dogmas, church-membership, baptisms, theologies, or any other thing or thought that has been so emphasised by the priest-hoods of the race. Not a word. The judgment is declared on the basis of how you have stood in relation to the physical and social miseries of your fellow-men—their hunger, and need, and wretchedness, and bondage. Let those who may explain it away : there it stands, until all such suffering is abolished. Righteousness, love, the Christ-life, devotion to the Will of God, can find no final test except that which Jesus Himself revealed in His own life—**absolute selfless devotion to Humanity.**

If we consider the great Gospel of the Kingdom of God which He said He came to declare : just look at the opening announcement : " The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath anointed me to preach a glad message to the poor people ; he hath sent me to heal those broken in spirit, to proclaim deliverance to captives, to open the eyes of the blind, and to set at liberty them that are bruised." Surely if ever there was a Social Mission, here it is. No revolutionist that ever lived had such a sweeping Social Vision for Human Betterment and the deliverance of humanity in this world to all the possible significance that human life is capable of.

At this time it was deeply impressed upon me, the supreme place of importance that Jesus placed upon

these "teachings" or "words" or "sayings." Plans of Salvation and Systems of Theology have greatly obscured these teachings. We have had Paulism, Calvinism, Methodism, and the rest. How the beaten, sad-hearted, oppressed world aches this very hour for the real application and realization of **the teaching of Jesus.**

I do not believe that the living soul finds rest by works, but by a living faith, that discovers and acknowledges and enters into oneness with the Father. But a man is not justified by faith unless his faith makes him just. "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and **do not the things which I say.**" "Every man that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them is like a man who builds his house upon a rock—he that heareth and **doeth not** is a foolish man, building on sand." "The words I speak unto you are life." "If ye love me keep my words and ye shall receive the Comforter—the Spirit of Truth!" "If a man love me he will keep my sayings, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." Power in prayer, according to Jesus, depends on these teachings abiding in us. And I say that these teachings of Jesus are **the most radical social utterances, and can never fit with Capitalism.**

Thus was my hunger and thirst rewarded. I saw that the whole Social Vision and Program of Jesus made Capitalism an outlaw.

I saw that all the Teachings of Jesus, spiritual or social, were diametrically opposed to the ideals, and theories, and basic practices of Capitalism.

I saw that the slightest embodiment in one's spirit of the mind of Jesus to the sacred lives about us would reveal Capitalism as the wolf that devours the sheep.

I saw that by Christ's interpretation of the judgment, not only the Capitalist system, but the professing Christian Church, **is weighed in the balance and found wanting.** For the church is not ministering to the

necessity of human lives, bringing to them the Justice, and Freedom, and abundant Life of the Kingdom of God, **but is bulwarking by silence and open defence, this brutal Capitalist Society, that fattens and batters in its immeasurable luxury and extravagance out of the unpaid earnings of the working-class.**

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#### IV.

### THE SEARCH FOR A PRINCIPLE.

Such a life as the Life of Jesus, and such Teachings as he uttered, culminating in his tragic death at the hands of the ruling class in church and state, **must have some fundamental principle as its root, and norm and centre.**

#### 1.—The Eternal Unity.

And I saw that the very essence and heart of the Life of the Son of Man was absolute and utter renunciation of merely private and personal interests, and the acceptance of his personal life as the organ, the voice, the expression, the incarnation, of the uttermost divine interests, and human advantages, as seen in the Light of Truth, and Love and Freedom. This was the Will of the Father.

Some have called this self-sacrifice. But that is not correct. The very term carries with it an element of negation and asceticism. This movement of the Soul from the limited private self to the universal is Self-Realization. It is coming to the fulness of the Stature of Man.

The spiritual unity with humanity which Jesus recognised and expressed in his individuality was not the result of the condescension of greatness to mediocrity, of high to low, of the good to the evil, of a spiritual aristocrat to the defiling touch of the mob. He felt that he was actually one with Humanity. Their real life was his life. There is only One Life. There was nothing else for him to be, nor for them to be, but that Life. Thus denying the limited view-point of merely



private, and personal, and temperamental, and local, and racial interests, **he incarnated social, universal, human values, and meanings, and interests, and freedoms.** The uttermost human meaning is the divine. Thus he was the Son of God and the Son of Man. Thus was he Christ-ed.

It was then given to me to see that the secret power of the Life and Mission of Jesus was not an isolated or personal affair confined to himself alone. That power and meaning is universal and cosmic. His life is a revelation of the fundamental principle of man's life as an individual, in a society of individuals ; in a world that is not a dead aggregate, but a living organism.

When this light deepened in my heart I saw that personal spiritual Illumination and cosmic release of the Eternal Life that one Is, was not something to attain as a thing-in-itself. It is only possible by the identification of the individual with Totality, and the incarnation in the individual of the human urge for satisfaction and Freedom, and the abandonment of life to the realization of Universal Human Freedom.

Thus, at the deepest reach of my most silent penetrating prayer and yearning for Truth, I found my soul driven outwards, as it were, to the Socialist Cause. The summit of my spiritual exaltation was in the lowly commonplace of the rough struggle of the Working-class for their emancipation from the Darkness and Injustice of Capitalism.

The uttermost effort of the intellect to find a philosophy of Individual Life brought me square upon my feet into the raw, real, actual, human fact, there to relate my Will as the organ of the Universal Good-Will, and to make my Life, in its way, an instrument or agent for the Social and Economic Freedom of Mankind.

## **2.—The Socialization of Personality.**

Socialism proposes that the basic industrial equip-

ment of land and machinery, which the people must have and use for life and labour, shall be **collectively** owned and democratically organised for the **freedom of all**, instead of being **privately** owned and plutocratically managed for the private **profit of the few**, and thus making misery for the many.

Now just as the present private-property scramble and gamble of Capitalism has accentuated, and nurtured, and intensified, and exalted the egoistic, selfish, and anti-social forces of human life in business and even in morals and religion : so Socialism will release, and develop, and glorify the altruistic, brotherly, and social elements of human life in all its phases.

And the individual Socialist of this transition period, standing in intellectual, and moral, and political conviction against this Capitalism, from which personally he cannot extricate himself, and in which he must still live ; and standing for a Socialism which concretely he must wait on Society as a whole to inaugurate—this individual Socialist passes through a personal psychological experience, a social “ new-birth,” in his mind and spirit towards all new life.

This social “ new-birth ” might not inaptly be called the **Socialization of Personality**—an experience in the Socialist man corresponding to the **socialization of industry**, which is the Socialist program in the material world.

The eventual outcome of this experience is without doubt to release the Social Man—the Son of Man mentioned in the bibles of the race. This progress of **Socialization of Personality** begins when a man ceases from merely private interests, and begins to be the register, in his body, or mind, of the ultimate human value. As soon as his mind begins to think of his interests as being locked inextricably with the larger interests of a whole class of sufferers, who suffer from the same socially inflicted wrongs—then begins the Socialization of Personality. As soon as this process begins the Capitalistic consciousness is punctured.

Peter Burrowes, in his great "Revolutionary Essays," gives us this sublime paragraph :—

"Human **wisdom** may be said to consist of a man's ability to separate biography from history : while human **virtue** is the will, based upon such ability, to choose the larger social interest : and **Socialism** is the sum in practice of such ability, and such will-of-the-larger-life, in national and world administration."

When we finally awake from the horrible nightmare of Capitalism, with its unnatural accentuation of private-property interests, developing and nourishing the corresponding selfishness and egoistic states of mind : when the Socialist Commonwealth shall have made a social form and body in which the race-soul can find a home and express itself : then the simple, easy, glorious Truth of our Unity with one another and with God shall appear, and a fellowship of souls, from which we are now suffering exiles, will be commonplace.

There will be "no temple therein" ; religion will not be a thing of days, and ceremonies, and forms, and functions, a sort of excrescence in the social body ; it will be the rugged health, and rosy glow, and inspired glory of the common life, lived in Justice, Brotherhood, and Freedom.

# The Impending Social Revolution.

## I.

### REVOLUTION DEFINED.

A revolution occurs in any field where a new principle displaces an old principle. Thus, a religious revolution is precipitated when the seat of authority in matters religious is changed from a book or a priesthood, and acknowledged in the heart or conscience of the individual. A political revolution occurs when the functions of government are transferred from the arbitrary powers of kings or kaisers or sultans, and placed in the mandate of the people. An industrial revolution happened when the power of steam was applied to machinery in the latter part of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century. The other day naval critics declared that the introduction of wireless telegraphy and submarines would cause a revolution in naval warfare. The airship will precipitate another revolution in military procedure. Should Sir William Ramsay discover the method of transmuting silver into gold there would be precipitated a revolution in the method of paying national debts.

#### 1.—The Social Revolution.

But no revolution has ever occurred in human history comparable in any respect with that upon which we have now entered. It is so great because it is a revolution in **the economic relations of men**. The relations of men in bread-getting are fundamental, basic. And the social revolution of our time involves the application of a new principle in the relations of men to one another in getting their living, in the use of the land and machinery. Such a revolution is virtually a new dispensation in the life of humanity.



**Social ownership by the whole people of the basic equipment of land and machinery** is the new principle destined to take the place of private ownership by the few. And co-operative use and administration of this equipment is the new principle in the relations of bread-getting, destined to take the place of competitive or monopolistic use and administration for private profit.

To educate the working-class to these two new principles in the one Gospel of Socialism, to summon the conscience of humanity to the righteousness of the new régime, and to arouse the moral and social energies of the people to a united effort to put these principles into full operation—this is the object of the revolutionary movement.

## **2.—Social Revolution, Not Mere Reform.**

By keeping in mind that a new principle destroys the old in fulfilling it, we shall be saved from confounding the moral and political outlook of the Social Revolution with any mere deepening of existing moral ideals or with any extension, however great, of individual philanthropy or public charity.

So also we shall no longer confuse the issues of the social revolution with mere social reform, however desirable. The social revolution comes not to mend the capitalist system, but to end it. No statesman, who is wise, puts the new wine into old economic bottles or effete systems, or new patches on the old and worn-out social garments. Every little social reform seems for the moment so encouraging that it saps the revolutionary energy of many. The working-class vote is baited and caught. Time wears on. The workers toil on. The exploitation continues. The axe has not been laid to the root of the tree. Taxation that looks more just, schemes for the unemployed, anti-sweating laws, trade-union victories—all are good, all necessary, all probably inevitable in the transition period. But the hurt of the people is not healed. However tremendous

the task, however titanic the effort, nothing but the overthrow of Capitalism can deliver the people.

Social reforms, religious revivals, political upheavals, scientific achievements, which leave the basis of the present social order virtually intact—each and all will fail to make a free world.

Except this civilisation be born again we cannot enter the next phase of the Kingdom of God. **That which is born of the flesh of Capitalism is Capitalism. That which is born of the new spirit is of the kingdom of the free.** Marvel not that I say unto you, Ye must be socially born again.

### **3.—The Revolution at Our Doors.**

This revolution is now on. We do not have to prophesy that it shall be. It is here. We have already entered upon it. To the conservative classes the revolution has been coming as a thief in the night. But the birth-throes thereof have been given to warn us for half a century. It now begins to disclose itself as the conscious hope and task of the whole working-class of the world. And it advances rightfully to claim the conscience of men against all the opposition of the perverted moral ideas and pseudo-religions of Capitalism.

**The spirit of the revolution is already disturbing the peace of Capitalistic religion in the organised churches. It is a menace and a pest to both the Capitalistic political parties.** It is molesting the orthodoxy of the old trade unionist. It is about to claim the co-operative movement as its natural child and ally. "Votes for Women" is not an end, but an equipment of our mothers and wives and sisters to do battle royal in the great Social Revolution and after. The revolution has already begun to answer the bitter cry of the children. A little child may lead us. The dove of peace has fled the peace conferences of Capitalism's armed camps, and now hovers over the international congresses of the

revolutionary movement of the working-classes. The physical need of humanity, crying for just conditions of life and labour; the intellect of the race seeking for order; the soul and conscience of man hungering for freedom and brotherhood—**all begin to feel the oncoming tide of the new social order.** Behold, it is at our very doors! A harvest of the ages is at hand!

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## II.

### THE SLAVERY OF THE AGES.

It used to be the custom of great preachers to dangle the souls of men over the very flames of hell, or to hold them up in the fierce light of the Last Day of Judgment, and to accentuate the effect by dilating on the uncertainty of life and the certainty and proximity of death. This undoubtedly had the desired effect on millions of people. Our tame, modern, scientific, reasoned existence has no terrors or immensities which the mind can face, so that it may be lifted out of its contemptible mediocrities, and its petty personal concerns, so that it might face a really vast situation. I have sometimes felt a nausea as I have looked into the faces before me and read the infinitesimal private interests that imprisoned the people, so that it was psychologically impossible for them to even temporarily entertain a large human problem. Sometimes I have wished for the "good old days" so that I might dangle them awhile in the light of Inferno, or the Judgment, so that they might look at the sweep of history, and take a real insight from some historic generalisation without instantly wondering what their ignorant next-door neighbour would say, or whether they would lose a customer by it, or whether it would add a half-penny on the rates. Surely we are a contemptible spawn!

It is almost impossible to state the simplest and most patent observations on human life or human history **without gashing the sensitive petty private interests of many respectable imbeciles.** One could

wish for some holiday of the intellect when we might present as in a play, or in a pageant, our real ideas, so that they might, at least, get a hearing, even though not to be taken seriously—since shortly we were all to come back to our deary ignorance and out of that delightful holiday where we spoke the Truth in play or pageant !

It is well that Immortality is only accorded to those who perceive Truth and Freedom and Eternal Delight. If it were otherwise—if Death did not gather his daily harvest—the earth would be stinking with the ancient slime of Ignorance, of our elders and superiors still refusing surrender to Light and Progress, and endeavouring to shackle the race with their age-long lies. **O blessed Death ! We thank thee for the harvests that thou hast gathered !**

Well. This is a long preamble apparently irrelevant to the theme. But the mind of the race needs a jolt, which indeed I shall not offer, but is hinted in a few main principles of this pamphlet. I want to cut history in cross-sections and look straight at its structure. I shall weep no tears. I shall look and report what the cold glance perceives. And when you look at cross-sections of history and make sweeping generalisations, you omit exceptions, and you are seemingly false to some smaller viewpoints.

### **1.—The Robbery of the Workers.**

The most cursory reading of the history of empires and civilisations may easily precipitate one into the mood of old Omar Khayyam, when he declared that whatever being was originally responsible for the dark tragedy of history should be made to fall down as a sinner before the human race, and with deep and full confession of the crime against us, ask our forgiveness. The common practice, we are aware, is quite the opposite. Let us proceed to look over the pages of history, and read the large handwriting which he may read who runs.



**Never has there lived a working-class that was not legally and respectably robbed.** The job has always been done beautifully, with due ornamentation of dignity, and we might say prayerfully and religiously.

I repeat. Never in all the history of the human race, in its organised civilisations, have the toiling peoples received the product of their labour.

That is the first never. The history of the human race is an unceasing story of how the product of the toil of the workers has been perpetually filched from them, and they themselves, although producing all wealth, reduced to penury and slavery. The great masses of the people, generation after generation, have been held in helpless servitude to the powerful and privileged classes. This statement needs some concrete examples. And the mass of matter to prove the statement is so great that it would fill volumes. We select but a few scattered pages.

The history of the primitive man shows that even before the dawn of civilisation man was the prey of man. The Assyrian kings, back in the dim past, boasted of the number of the slaves they captured. The laws of Manu in ancient Hindostan recognise slavery as the basis of society. Alexander the Great, in a fit of temper sold into slavery 30,000 inhabitants of the Greek city of Thebes. Aristotle says that in Athens, 700 B.C., the poor were in absolute slavery to the rich who controlled the land. The actual material glory in the age of Pericles was the product of slave labour. In Delos, 10,000 slaves were sold in a single day. Rome employed slave labour on the most gigantic scale ever known in history. **The overstocked slave-market was a boon to the Roman Capitalists.** Cræsus, the Roman Rockefeller, made his fortune out of the work of these helpless, landless men. Great Cæsar took thousands of Gauls to Rome and sold them into servitude to noble patricians.

The Barons of the Middle Ages continued the crime. They traded the serfs as land and cattle. The slavery of

Englishmen, in the early part of the 19th century, in the manufacturing cities of the north, is only paralleled for outrage by the slavery of the negro in the United States during the same period. The trade in slaves in America ran up to over £3,000,000 annually. The slave markets were crowded, and great fortunes were lost and won in this respectable gamble over human flesh. In the memory of men now living it was a crime to teach a negro to read or write. In this respect modern Christian nations were more devilish than the ancients, who never forbade the education of the slaves.

Romaine Patterson says: "Every state fought for liberty against every other state, but within each state there existed a class to whom liberty was denied. . . . It mattered not by what name the state was known. The slavery which formed the main basis of wealth of Babylonian, Egyptian, and Persian kings formed likewise the main source of the wealth of the Athenian and Roman Republics . . . . a system of servile labour was consolidated, elaborated and prolonged throughout the history of all the great empires and republics of the ancient world, and it became the source of their wealth."

And the tragedy ends not. In one English city I saw a mob of men, the fragment of 20,000 unemployed—landless, tool-less, friendless—living or dying in a victimage more severe than chattel slavery. I have seen the same in New York and Chicago. Whether in the old world or the New, right now, the working-classes **are systematically robbed of the major portion of the product of their toil.** At this very moment millions of human beings of our own religion and language and kin are ekeing out the miserable existence of unowned slaves; hundreds of thousands cannot sell their labour to the masters of the world at any price; men, women, and children consume their lives away in a bitter struggle to live, while wealth is being produced in uncounted millions.

## **2.—The Secret of Exploitation.**

During all these long ages the labour of the people has been wonderfully productive, increasing more and more until the present time. There has been no poverty of nature, no poverty of the products of labour, no poverty in the skill and muscle of the workers. **But the ruling and privileged classes have possessed themselves of that which they never earned.** They have taken it from the surplus product of the working-classes of the world.

These industrial masters and oppressors of the people in all the ages secured and perpetuated their mastery and oppression by one simple economic condition, viz.: **They controlled the natural, material sources of the earth, and industrial opportunities and equipment, and utilised these resources for their own private enrichment.** Thus poverty and slavery have been inevitable to the many.

The irresistible force of sex-energy, planted immovably at the very roots of human existence, poured its numberless millions of human beings upon the face of the earth.

Once born, the strongest force in the breast of these millions is the love of life.

Life is impossible except through access to the earth and its gifts, as produced by human labour.

But the earth and its products and the mechanical equipment for labour **these millions found already in the private possession of the strong and privileged classes.**

And thus, rather than leap into fire or water, or over the rocks, or perish of hunger, the love of life mastered these millions. **They remained alive, but on the only condition possible—viz., as the slaves and hirelings of the few who controlled the earth and the fulness thereof.**

## **3.—Man's Inhumanity to Man.**

The history of man's inhumanity to man one long, terrible tale of unmitigated cruelty, brutal

oppression, and unforgivable outrage upon the bodies and minds and souls of the teeming millions. Rather than die, they lived a living death under the dominion and at the mercy of those who owned the earth.

**The private ownership by the few of the sources of physical existence, for all—this is the one abiding base of all slavery, from the days of the Pharaohs to modern Capitalism.** The empires of Babylon, Persia, and Egypt, and the Republics of Greece and Rome, were all built upon the bleeding backs of baffled, degraded, and terror-stricken human beings, by virtue of this principle. And this record of ancient history finds its continuance through Middle Age serfdom and the chattel slavery of Britain and America up to the nineteenth century. But the sad story does not end there. The present chapters of the long drawn-out affliction of the enslaved working-classes may now be read in the daily records of twentieth-century Capitalism, with its sweating, unemployment, and labour wars, in the accounts of poverty-stricken multitudes exiled from the land and besieged in the unwholesome streets and alleys of our great industrial centres. Just yesterday you may have read in one column of the daily Press of women, leaving their babes in single-room tenements, going off to make paper boxes for us at one shilling and sixpence per gross, and by working seventy to seventy-five hours a week they earned a miserable 5s. a week. In the next column we read that an Earl dies leaving an estate in Lancashire worth £4,000,000, including 70,000 acres of land and urban property bringing in a huge rent-roll.

Take a cross-section of human history in any country from Nebuchadnezzar to Marcus Aurelius, from Marcus Aurelius to Louis XIV., from Louis XIV. to President Roosevelt or Edward VII., and the horror of the poverty and desperate struggle of the toiling multitudes has only one cause—**the control by the few of the sources of life God gave to all.** This is the base of all tyranny. This is the ground of all slavery. This is the one root unrighteousness of human history.



**Privately own and control for private profit the sources of the bread and labour supply, and the toiling millions are in chains, and the product of their toil must inevitably flow into the hands of the class that never earned it.**

### III.

## THE DYNAMIC OF REVOLT.

But what if the product of the labour of the masses has always flowed into the hands of a master class that has controlled, and still controls, the means of life and labour? Does life consist simply in getting the product of one's labour? Are the rich so happy, are their lives so complete, that they are to be envied? Can the poor not have life and joy even if they do surrender a large proportion of the product of their labour? Let the rich and strong possess the earth! Let them revel in luxury and extravagance! "Life is more than meat and the body than raiment." Let the poor and exploited workers of the world have a gospel of life that needeth not these things. **Why all this ado about the product of labour being taken from those who earn it, and placed in the hands of those who earn it not?**

### 1.—The Nature of Property.

It is in answer to this false position, in all its absurd ramifications, that the Social Revolution comes, to sweep away age-long ignorance and to **establish a new world of social righteousness, through a just social economy.**

The natural property of the eagle is his swift wing, of the deer his fleet foot, of the bird his feathers, of the horse his hoof. **And the natural property of a man is the normal product of his labour.** Naked he comes into the world, which is the house full of good things which God gave him for use and enjoyment. By his muscle and his skill applied to the gifts of nature **he produces the necessities, comforts, and satisfactions of life.** These material things constitute a soil in which man grows.

They feed his body. They make possible leisure for the development of the mind. And the production of things through labour in Justice and Brotherhood is the sacrament of souls. Now, if one small class controls the basis by which all live, and if the natural reward of the labourer is intercepted, and his true natural properties never reach him, then the worker is not only poor in purse, poor in the world's goods, poor in material things—he is poor in all that human life can possibly mean.

Rob the eagle of his swift wing—his natural property—you have no eagle. Rob the deer of his fleet foot—no deer. Let the horse take not only his own hoof, but the feathers of the bird—no bird—and the horse is doubtfully enriched. Let a ruling class rob the labourer of the natural product of his toil, **you have not a man left, you have a slave.** And up to date in human history we have had monstrous ruling classes, cursed by their ill-gotten gains, living in a riot of wealth, and beneath them not men, but slaves—slaves with impoverished bodies, with dwarfed and unenlightened minds, their souls beaten, depressed, and degraded.

Thus we see that the problem precipitated by the Social Revolution is not simply a quarrel between the Haves and Have-nots. **The problem of justice in bread-getting involves the whole man.** It is the problem of the release of the mind. It is the problem of the free soul. It is the problem of freedom, the problem of righteousness, the problem of the Kingdom of God in the earth. By all the sacredness and possibility of the soul of man this problem must be confronted and settled. It is not a side issue, it is a supreme issue. It is not for the after-thoughts of your religion or righteousness. It is primary and fundamental.

## **2.—The New Righteousness.**

All the thefts and dishonesties of all petty criminals for all time, for which they have been hanged or incarcerated in shame behind prison bars, **are as a drop in**

**the bucket compared to the legalised plunder of human lives by the propertied classes** from the days of Pharaoh to modern Capitalism—a legalised plunder ever sanctified by the priesthoods that have fed at the tables of the rich.

All the murders and assassinations of history, committed by man against man through hate or passion, and all the slain in feud and war, are few compared to the millions of men, women, and children done to death, **and now being daily done to death by virtue of social injustice, through the dark nights of poverty in the terrible struggle for existence**—a struggle fearfully and unnecessarily accentuated by the control which the few maintain over the cupboards and larders of the world.

All the intellectual enlightenment of the centuries is a mere trifle compared to that intellectual release, and expansion of human genius if the multitudes of the race were emancipated from economic servitude; if the toiling millions were secure in the product of their toil, **and thus able to secure leisure and equipment for the culture of the mind.**

All the personal injustice that man can inflict on man in a free attack as an individual in the battle of life, even on the basis of the brute struggle, is nothing compared to the **refined injustice incarnated in unjust social institutions in the use of land and machinery, and the maladministration of social labour.**

All the unrighteousness and sin of individual lives, one against the other, poured into one stream would make a mere rivulet compared to **this ocean of unrighteousness and sin against humanity, by virtue of mastery of their only means of life and labour.** The tragedy of it all is that we have for centuries strained at gnats and swallowed camels. We have tithed mint and anise and cummin and **have forgotten the justice and mercy of social righteousness.**

All the goodness, or loving kindness, tenderness, mercy, even Christlikeness, manifested by all the individual saints and converted religious persons and

church members for twenty centuries is a mere twinkle of a star in the black night of history, compared to the bright noonday of social righteousness and brotherhood and human goodwill, which would be released and become the open fact of the common day **if justice were established in the use of land ; justice in the use of machinery ; justice in the administration of labour ; justice, in short, in the bread-getting of the race.**

### **3.—Socialism and the Christ-Mission.**

If God is ever to wipe away the tears from the face of man this age-long wrong must be overthrown. If the mission of Jesus is ever to get the upperhand in human affairs, the social revolution must come to pass. There is no more good news to the poor unless there is the message and the task to abolish this age-long night of poverty. There is no deliverance for captives unless this social captivity is ended. There is no setting at liberty the people that are bruised unless this age-long bruising machinery is stopped. If we are ever to call the poor and the maimed and the halt to the banquet of creation, the programme of the revolution must be inaugurated. The Heavenly Father may know we have need of all these things, and He may have provided for these needs in the limitless resources of nature, but **we never can have them for the people except by seeking the kingdom of social justice and human brotherhood—which is the Kingdom of God—which is the social vision of the social revolution.**

### **4.—The Urge for Fulness of Life.**

Man is not only a physical being with material wants. He is an intellectual and moral being. He is a soul. The earth and its fulness meets his physical need. The universe is the field for his intellectual adventure and discovery. And the fellowship of souls in using that earth, and in penetrating the secrets of that world and



life—that is the joy and release of souls. Hence this struggle for a living, with the work of the mind and the relations of souls involved, is a struggle for all that life can mean, for all that a soul can know, or feel, or be. Hunger, in the case of man, is hunger of the body, hunger of the mind, and hunger of the spirit. His battle for a living involves them each and all. Moreover, he is a soul in a society of souls, each filled with similar desires. And out of our associated existence as souls there arise our conflict and antagonism, and hence the problem of freedom and fellowship.

We are not angels, but men. We are embodied souls. The body, with its needs, constitutes the arena of the soul's manifestation. In that arena the intellect must find its expression and the heart its love and joy. Out of that raw fact we cannot escape. In this battle for bread we must find our freedom and fellowship. The word must become flesh. This is our incarnation. The highest philosophy, and the deepest religion of the heart, cannot be an escape from the bread struggle, but the redemption thereof. The riches of the mind are dependent upon plain, matter-of-fact bread. The highest symbol of spiritual illumination is the sacrament of bread and wine. And up to date we have not partaken of that sacrament worthily; **but we shall when we have abolished economic injustice, and have organised our daily bread-getting in freedom and brotherhood.** Justice in bread-getting is the first great sublime righteousness. **For it means the perfected body, the illumined mind, the comrade soul.**

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#### IV.

### THE UN-ATTEMPTED TASK.

But now observe. Never in all these long centuries with a few wonderful exceptions, now claimed as examples by the present social revolution, has there existed a movement which has had for its express object

the abolition of this unceasing crime against the human race. This is our second never.

No movement has ever existed **to guarantee to the worker private property in the full product of his toil.**

No movement has ever existed **to deprive the few of the power to control the sources of life and labour of the many.**

No movement has existed **to organise industry on terms of justice and human brotherhood.**

You can find the words liberty, justice, and righteousness in all the religions, ethics, politics, and philosophy of Assyria, Greece, Rome, England, and America, covering a period of forty centuries, but, without exception, those words signify social relations that **never inquire into this supreme and fundamental curse of associated humanity.**

Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, we may place at the head of the list of preachers of righteousness in which this social injustice is unquestioned. Paul and Marcus Aurelius ; Hildebrand and Martin Luther ; St. Francis and John Wesley ; Hegel and Huxley, and Spencer ; Gladstone and General Booth ; Prime Minister Asquith and President Roosevelt, each and all preached, and now preach, a liberty, a justice, and a righteousness that sustains and sanctifies the power of the few to own and control for private profit the resources of nature and the power of machinery, and through this private control for private profit to exploit the human race, and reduce the masses to servitude and degradation.

No religious body, no ecclesiastical organisation, Roman Catholic, Anglican, or Nonconformist, from the Pope of Rome to the Salvation Army, **has ever sought to guarantee the right of the people to live in freedom on God's earth.** They have never sought to secure to the people the natural product of toil. No religion or philanthropy has sought to organise men in relations of brotherhood in the use of the earth and the means of livelihood.

At this very moment, twenty centuries since the

ruling classes crucified Christ because He championed the cause of the people, it is almost impossible to get a church building in which to impeach this colossal wrong against an outraged humanity, and to plead the cause of social justice.

The capitalist system is the present form of controlling the life and labour of the people, and at this very moment, when great financiers are beginning to cover their faces in shame at the sights of misery among their own employés, and when even the politicians of the old political parties all over the civilised world begin to doubt the rationality and righteousness of their political faiths, which leave the present system intact, the most stalwart apologists and dependable defenders of capitalism are the men who are called the pastors or shepherds of the people, **the men who ought to voice the cry of the oppressed.**

### 1.—Our Relation to the Past.

In thus sweeping the pages of history, disclosing age-long injustice, to get the historical setting of the impending social revolution, and weighing up the morals and religion of the world in relation to that injustice, it may seem that we have discounted every gain of the race that has come through the efforts of the great souls and the great movements of the past. But the very reverse is the fact. We can only honour Moses and Jesus, and Bruno and Wilberforce, and the other great ones by being true to humanity in our day, and **by preventing their righteousness being made a bulwark for present unrighteousness.** We must harvest what they planted. They rejoiced to see our day.

The nineteenth century alone gave tremendous gains to the race. But every one of these gains falls under the heading of unfinished business with which we open the century.

The nineteenth century gave us more machinery than all the previous centuries of history. But that ma-

chinery has not lightened the burden of the people. **Unless that power can be socialised for the common good it bids fair to become a curse and a tyranny.**

In the last century trade unionism came to its power and victory. But unless it proceeds to organise the whole working-class to capture the equipment of civilisation for the people, it will become only the aristocracy of labour, in an industrial feudalism, beneath whom struggle a vast underworld of unorganised, hopeless millions.

Popular education, with its schoolhouses in every ward and village, is a mighty achievement. But science and learning halt like the ancient philosophies until they **proceed to socialise the bread-getting of the people,** and thus prevent the exploitation of an intellectual proletariat.

The ballot is in the hands of the worker, and soon will be in the hands of his wife and mother. But political power is a means to an end, an instrument or weapon. And if the industrial masters of the world succeed **in pitting one-half of the workers against the other half in the political camps of the master-class,** then democracy shall become the bulwark of power and privilege.

Evangelical Christianity in the nineteenth century came to the very zenith of its power. It planted tens of thousands of churches, sent forth its hundreds of missionaries, enrolled millions of children in its Sunday-schools, published the Scriptures in every tongue. It followed the lead of some of the greatest preachers of Christendom: Finney, Spurgeon, Moody, Parker, Farrar. The Salvation Army, a host of leagues of mercy, hundreds of groups of philanthropists, and scores of charity organisations have arisen during the century. Boast of all this religious fervour and activity, and charity and philanthropy, and you are boasting of a royal beginning, but not an end, a preparation, an inauguration. The whole religious world halts. **There is an actual danger that the Church shall disclose its**



**pagan elements at the command of Capitalism, and actually deny the Christ. For the Christ cometh through the Social Revolution.**

Thus the Social Revolution, instead of denying the heritage of the past, accepts it, interprets it, and proceeds to realise and actualise that for which sages and seers and saviours have lived and died. "First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear."

**The Social Revolution is the full corn in the ear of many a bloody planting in the fields of time.**

So the Social Revolution does not come to destroy but to fulfil. We do not point out this failure of Christendom, of religious movements, and philanthropic and political parties for mere attack, but to show by striking historical contrast the sublime task and the unparalleled righteousness of the Socialist cause.

What all religions and philosophy and politics up to date have never attempted to perform, or never dared to inaugurate, the Socialist movement proceeds to do.

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## V.

### **SOCIALISM, THE GOOD SAMARITAN.**

Accepting the parable of Jesus we may say that the present Socialist movement, being the organised and militant expression of the Social Revolution, is the good Samaritan of all human history.

A lawyer had asked of Jesus the way of eternal life. And in this wonderful parable Jesus discloses at once the way of life to the individual soul, and the normal social task of the sons of God. "This do and thou shalt live," said Jesus. In one brief line Jesus, the Master-Genius and the lover of men, sums up the total of individual and social righteousness.

#### **1.—Violated Humanity.**

Behold the unusual significance of the parable of the Good Samaritan. This human race, the body of God,

went down the path of history from the days of primitive man, through the days of the Pharaohs, and on down to modern Capitalism. **And during all these long centuries he has fallen among thieves.** These thieves have first robbed him of the due product of his toil. They have by this method stripped him of his natural birthright, stripped him of his dignity, stripped him of his rights, stripped him of that possibility of intellectual enlightenment which should have clothed his mind as with a garment. At this very moment he lies before us naked and exposed in the helplessness of his ignorance. But more—they have left him half dead—more than half dead, in body, mind, and spirit.

And during all these long centuries, as I have pointed out, whatever priesthoods and philanthropies and politics have come along, and whatever they may have done, **they have passed by on the wrong side as far as this robbery, this stripping, this universal economic havoc is concerned.**

But, by-the-by, after the long, long crime has had its way, and priests and statesmen have passed by, the despised and unlikely Socialist movement comes along, the Good Samaritan of history, **and finds the working-class robbed, stripped, and actually half dead.**

The Socialist movement finds two-thirds of the product of labour abstracted from the worker by the Capitalist class. We find his children driven from the school and the fireside to the workshop and into the sweater's den. We find the minds of these little ones stripped naked, and bereft of the garments of light. We find that the average age of the workers is actually thirty-five years, only half the normal three-score years and ten, to say nothing of the meanings and possibilities of life that never emerge even during that short thirty-five years. Nay, more, we find him on the roadside. The vast majority of the working-classes have not a spot on this earth in which they may dwell in security, where they may labour in joy, except by sufferance of the owners of the earth and the profit-mongers of in-

dustry. **And tens of thousands of the unemployed are literally on the roadside, robbed, stripped, and left half dead.**

## **2.—The Oil of Economic Truth.**

It is at this point that the Good Samaritan of human history comes along, and first pours oil into the wounds of the working-class. In the sacred literature oil is a symbol of truth. Truth means healing and freedom, and righteousness. In the last analysis truth is not a doctrine to be preached—it is a vision to be seen. We should have the word truth as a verb, then “truth-ing” would mean perceiving that which makes men free. **The oil that the social revolution pours into the wounds of the working-class is the truth of economics,** revealing the wealth of God’s gifts in Nature, showing the limitless power of machinery, uncovering the almost miraculous power of the principle of co-operation and organisation. The truth that men can organise industry as brothers, using the earth and the equipment of industry co-operatively—this is oil in the wounds of mankind. It is hope and healing and refreshment. It quickens his broken body. It stimulates his blinded mind. It arouses the moral and social energies as nothing else can do. It inspires the will to a great social task. And all over the world to-day this oil is being poured into the wounds of a robbed, stripped, and half-dead working-class. This oil in the wounds is the first great work of the revolution.

If the present Socialist Movement has done nothing else it has poured oil upon the wounded working-class. And this oil is healing to the hurt of humanity. The Socialist Movement has placed into the consciousness of the worker a new conception of his own worth, his own dignity, his own right in the universe. Socialists are called dreamers. Very well. They have at least awakened millions of workers from the nightmares of ignorance, and if they have only offered the awakened

a dream, they have started the psychological activity for worlds that are to be. There is a psychological basis for Social Revolution. The average dull, dreary, hopeless monotony of consciousness must be broken. The low, mean, degraded conceptions of life ought to be shattered. And thus a bolt of mental dynamite must be discharged in the world of thought and feeling. New possibilities to life, new meanings, new avenues, new worlds must be opened up. The literature of revolt must find a seeding ground in deeper areas of consciousness. Where there is no vision the people perish. The Socialist Movement, quite irrespective of its immediate or more remote political or economic proposals, is a vast social prayer. It is an articulate cry for deliverance to the Kingdom of the Good. It is a genuine revolt against unnatural and abnormal conditions that fret and distress the mind and heart. It is the ache for an intelligent world. **It is the challenge of the Race-Soul against the limitations of experience.** It is a summons for the Truth that shall make free. It is the demonstration that man—the Spirit—is master of his environment, and not victim. The Socialist Movement, as a mere psychological revolt, is one prophecy of the new worlds of an emancipated humanity. It is oil and wine to a wounded race.

### **3.—The Beast of Civilisation.**

In the parable it is said that the Good Samaritan lifted the robbed and wounded man and placed him upon his beast. What is this beast on which the robbed and wounded workers of the world shall be placed? The answer is not far to seek. **The Beast is the Power and Equipment of Civilisation.** Notwithstanding the titanic achievements of modern times, there are tens of thousands of human beings in the heart of our great industrial life that are more helpless than savages. The very presence and power of civilised life, when not available for them, is a colossal disaster, like earth-



quake, or fire, or flood, which no activity in the social or economic life on their part can withstand. The economic laws, like the mills of the gods, grind exceeding small. Outside of railway stations, with their rush and roar of modern achievement, stand the men and women, as if paralysed by that awful avalanche of power. Looking into the mill-gates, begging for work, stand the ragged men, women, and children, looking upon the machines that manufacture garments as if by magic. Underneath the shadow of massive walls of commerce you will find the shivering victims of life, hungry, penniless, homeless. I have never read in the annals of the redmen, that such acute suffering was ever thrust upon isolated individuals by any social system they ever established. In dull monotone, in ten thousand churches, the prayer is offered: "Give us this day our daily bread." That prayer has never yet been answered to any civilisation. Can it be answered? Shall the race come to a place where Bread shall be sure, and where the problems of life shall be in the higher realms of art and thought?

#### **4.—Organise Civilisation.**

The Beast is the Power and Equipment of Civilisation. The Socialist Movement that organises and expresses the Social Revolution, proposes a re-organisation of our economic life so that the Economic Forces and Activities shall be the Servant of man and not his Master. The general propositions of the Revolution may be outlined briefly as follows:—

1. Under the present Capitalist system the **Land** is privately owned, and privately administered for **private profit**. The Social Revolution aims at the **Socialisation of Land**, thus guaranteeing equality of opportunity in the fundamental resources of social existence. The present budgets of England and Germany contain elemental recognition of the principle involved. That a few people should control thousands upon thousands of acres or collect millions annually in

ground rents, while the "Son of Man has not where to lay his head" seems the climax of social stupidity. The Socialisation of Land Values, and then the Nationalisation of Land will be found to be the inevitable programme of any people in the twentieth century that will save itself from social disintegration.

2. Under the Capitalist System the Power of machinery is **privately owned and privately administered for private profit**. The Social Revolution is directed towards the Socialisation of that amount of this mighty Mechanical Equipment **as shall make the social body free**. No doubt a vast amount of production may still be left for long enough in private hands, but the fundamental basic equipment for the necessities and comfort and freedom of the whole people should be socially administered and pass into the social body, and be accomplished as if involuntarily, as digestion or assimilation in the physical body.

3. Under Capitalism the products of human labour on land and with machinery are counters in a great gamble for gain. They are produced for profit. It was only yesterday that one man held the world's wheat crop in his grasp! When the Social Revolution has had its first day the fundamental requirements of man will be produced for **use and not for profit**, at the least possible expenditure of human time and energy, and with the greatest possible perfection and rapidity by our marvellous mechanical devices, utilising the powers in creation.

4. Since Land, Machinery, and the Products of Human Labour are thus administered by private individuals for private profit; and since human beings alone can make these three available for social use, it is evident that human beings are actually bought and sold and gambled with under the operation of Capitalism. Capitalism is an ill-disguised slavery to an eye that will look. Capitalism says: "I have nothing to do with human beings. I wish them well. I buy and sell and monopolise the dead thing called

land. I organise and control the mere mechanical equipment. It can neither know nor suffer. I market products—mere products ! I do not buy and sell men.” The Social Revolution sees through this mask, and tears it off, and declares that Industry shall be organised by man for man, and that the exploitation of human life shall cease for ever. Humanity shall be placed upon the Beast of Civilisation. The Socialist Movement is the Good Samaritan of Human History !

## The Messiah Cometh : Riding upon the Ass of Economics.

TO get an underhold of the subject before us, I wish to take the original wording of the theme, as that exactly expresses to my own consciousness the thing I want to say. My colleagues felt that the subject, as I had at first stated it, lent itself to humour or ridicule. Such a thing had never once crossed my mind. The theme, to my mind, expressed history and prophecy in one unique, symbolical phrase, and so, for advertising purposes, I submitted another wording which partly revealed and partly concealed the message I have to offer you. But, in order that I may give you the blood of my thought through its natural artery, now that we are assembled I shall retain the original wording, which is this : "The Messiah Cometh : Riding upon the Ass of Economics."

By this I mean that the word of truth and the moral and spiritual energy that is to deliver the people in our time to a new world of freedom does not come by way of the priest, the sacrament, the stained glass, the theological formula, the holy day, the wrapt pietism of the professional keepers of the kingdom, but it comes *via* the factory gates, the cry of the hungry, the heavy tread of the unemployed, the fields and valleys that ache for a happy and contented people, the common day of labour,—the Battle for Bread.

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### I.

#### THE MESSIANIC HOPE.

There are traces of the hope of a coming deliverer in the sacred literature of all peoples. This hope of a Messiah was especially strong among the Jews in the centuries immediately preceding our era. The conceptions of this Messianic age greatly varied, but, in



general, **the advent of the Messiah meant the dawn of an age of peace among men, material prosperity and happiness, and the release and perfection of the spiritual powers of the race.**

When the Son of Man appeared then He came in a very unpromising manner. The glorious temple glittered upon Mount Moriah. At its altars ministered thousands of priests clothed with ecclesiastical dignity. The system of worship was perfect. Nothing was lacking to ecclesiastical architecture, ritual, ceremony, and devotion. Surely the deliverer would come *via* the path thus prepared for his feet—where God was duly worshipped, His service duly rendered, His Word duly expounded. Or, if He came as a national hero, He should be born of the nobility, reared among the ruling-classes, received with *eclat* by deputations of Church and State. As a conquering deliverer, He should come riding on a fiery steed, caparisoned in gold and glittering with armour. But, alas! no more disappointing advent could be imagined. The Son of Man comes, His mother a peasant girl, His father a carpenter, His disciples greasy fishermen, His followers the rabble, the common people, “who heard Him gladly,” and—**to crown the rudeness and baseness of His advent—the Messiah comes riding into Jerusalem on an ass !**

There is something sublime beyond words in the dream of a Messianic age. It reveals, in a cross-section of human history, the sure promise of its realisation. **The race that can conceive of Messianic Personality is inherently destined to bring to pass the Messianic day of triumph over war, injustice, ignorance, and hate.** But ever it shall be that the keepers of the oracles, by their very sense of power and their association with the ideas and principles of ruling-classes, shall be unable to perceive the approach of the Messianic Age, and shall be utterly disappointed and disgraced by its method of approach. And so it is

to-day. **A Messianic deliverance is at hand—but on an ass !**

### **1.—The New Deliverance.**

The peoples of the whole world are crying for deliverance. Whatever past saviours and movements have done for the race, we are still undelivered ; we are still unsaved. We await redemption ; salvation remains a hope, not an experience. Social injustice is rampant and ruthless. The weak are trampled by the devotees of the Mammon-gods. The poor and degraded crowd the great cities of civilisation by millions. They crawl like vermin in a thousand centres of industry. **The working-classes of the world are still ruthlessly defrauded of the natural product of their toil.** The bodies, minds, and souls of the people are caught in irresistible currents of social and industrial strife. And the people cry by reason of their bondage.

### **2.—The Urge for Freedom.**

This urge of the working-classes of the world may fitly be called a Messianic movement, and its goal a Messianic deliverance. I think we may safely make the word Messianic carry all the hopes and ideals that fill the horizon of the Social Revolution.

The total urge at the base of the Social Revolution is for Fulness and Freedom of Life. It is life asserting itself against convention, barrier, power. If God is life—then the Social Revolution is God incarnate, seeking expression and fullest dramatisation in all possible concrete forms of abundant human experience. He who reads the present-day movement as a struggle between the Haves and Have-Nots, as if it were for a mere division of spoil, a mere envy of the poor, or a mere brute struggle to possess, knoweth not what he reads.

The whole ceaseless urge of this Labour Movement

is for the natural vigour, richness, and joy of **physical existence**, which ought to be the birthright of every human being. It is for leisure and liberty, for **intellectual culture and expression**, the free flow of the eternal fountains of art and genius. This urge is for that expanse and **flight of the soul into a world of spiritual meaning and illumination**, which is the crown of being. The revolution is driven onward by the dynamos of heart-hunger for love and comradeship, which is the incarnate form of absolute unity. Such is the sweep of the Messianic hope of the peoples now bound in the chains of Capitalism. But the Messiah, the Deliverer, the Emancipator—to this Messianic age—cometh riding on an ass. That ass is the Ass of Economics !

### 3.—Two Pictures.

I am writing these lines on a Sunday morning out in the open fields. The smell of grass and air will make my words ring true and purge them of artificiality and convention. I am within sight of the great cathedral. The chimes from the tower pour into my ears. I see worshippers as they hurry to the service of God. The ladies are beautifully, even elegantly, clad. They clasp beautiful Bibles and prayer-books in their hands. The gentlemen are dressed as for a state occasion—top hats are a striking feature of the hastening procession. They have closed the shops and stores and offices and banks. They are keeping the Sabbath-day holy. They are now approaching the place of worship. The shining motor-cars draw near the cathedral door with a modified Sabbatic speed. The lofty spire pierces the blue. The sweet, rich, glowing sunlight doth not enter. Within there is a “dim religious light,” the light of heaven being obstructed by man’s stone walls, or, if admitted, only through the stained glass of the narrow, mediæval window. The worshippers enter ; they have come to serve God—to pray to God—to chant God’s praises in many repetitions—

to receive the sacrament at the hands of a robed ecclesiastical dignitary—to hear the word of God explained. The theology is perfect ; who so impudent as to revise it ? The ceremony is a poem ; who would change the accent of a syllable ? The people are exhorted to cultivate a Christ-like state of mind, to be kind to the poor, to be faithful to the Church. His theme was **God, Christ, Religion, the Church.**

Not more than a mile away from the cathedral tower, away out in the open field, a crowd of people are gathering. Let us go and watch them. The men are simply dressed ; they wear caps—they do not remove them. The women are not numerous, but those present are not robed in silks and satins. Children gather round the speaker's box ; many of them are dirty and miserably clad. They have poured out from the long monotonous rows of tenements that reach to the edge of the open. The speaker hushes the noisy babble of the children before he can be heard. A drove of sheep runs past in the field ; the lambs bleating distract the listeners. There is no stained glass. The sun shines down through the broken clouds ; there is a sprinkle of rain. Will they have to disperse ? There is no priest ; there is no chant ; there is no prayer. They do not come to serve God ; they come to lift men ! They carry no Bibles. The poor little urchins round the box, and the tired, broken lives in the crowd are to them an open Word of God. A carpenter is speaking—I don't know his name. I heard one of his comrades say, " You better begin, Jack," and he began. **He talked about land and machines, employment and unemployment, rents and wages.** He told them of people worth millions and of millions worth nothing. He told the story of a man who had dropped almost dead from sheer starvation, hunting for work ; he talked about crowded populations, about Liberals and Tories, about ballots and Parliament, about the workers in other lands facing the same cruel struggles. He exhorted his fellow-workers to unite to alter these



wrongs. They heckled him. He mopped the sweat from his face and neck. He was vehement, ungrammatical, unpolished. His speech was much less ordered than I have indicated. Jack got down from the box. **His theme was Economics.**

#### **4.—The Contrast.**

I have given you two pictures. There convention, here romance ; there robes, here rags ; there ritual and rubric, here the deep urge of man-soul. There, peace, peace, here dissatisfaction, protest ; there melody, here murmur. The one refined, the other raw ; the one cultured, the other crude. The one hoary with age, boasting of its centuries ; the other youthful, its hope in the future. The one proud and pompous ; the other poor and unpretentious. The one great and honoured, the other commonplace, despised. That possesses the oracles of God ; this pulsates with the cry of Man. There they preach Christ ; here they plead for the "least one of these," His brethren.

**It is in this latter group—this murmuring, dissatisfied, protesting, unpretentious, uncultured, despised group, uttering in broken jargon the cry of the hungry and the dispossessed, that I see one standing like unto the Son of Man, and I hear him say, "I am come with good news to the poor, to deliver social captives, to set at liberty the people that are bruised," "and inasmuch as ye have done it for one of the least of these little children round the box, ye have done it unto Me."** The motor-cars whirl away from the temple of God, and sweep past that crowd with disdain, **and they see not that the Messiah is at hand** riding on an ass !

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## II.

### **ECONOMICS—BREAD.**

Let us return now from drama to plain prose. There is the organised Christian Church, with its temples and

priests and preachers ; its ritual and sermon and prayer and song ; its ecclesiastical and evangelical activity. Professedly it is the keeper of the world's conscience ; the expounder of the ways of God to men ; it opens and closes the doors of salvation ; it is the professed announcer of Redemption. If there is to be a Messianic message, inspiring the Messianic Hope, and introducing a Messianic Age, the next grand advance of the Kingdom of God in the earth, by all the rules of sequence, the Church should announce that message and bear us into that new era. But it shall not be so. Disappointment shall fall upon Zion.

**They shall not lead the Messiah forth from their temples.**

**They shall come forth from their temples to meet the**

**Messiah.** He shall come from a despised neighbouring

Nazareth, with the common, unbaptised herd about

him, and the children of the poor crying hosanna in the

streets ! The robed priest shall not know his God, and

the professed nonconformist pietist shall not know his

master ; and as the Lord of Life comes to answer the

long monotony " Thy Kingdom Come " of the divine

service, those who prayed that prayer will have no eyes

to see the coming of the Kingdom. For they expect

Him on a steed caparisoned in gold. How could they

recognise him otherwise ? **But so it shall not be.**

### 1.—Sacred Words.

There is a vocabulary which is supposed to be religious, which alone is considered capable of conveying the meaning of God to mankind. The words of that vocabulary are sacred. All others are secular. Some of these words are the following :—God, Lord, Christ, Holy Ghost, Prayer, Sin, Repentance, New Birth, Salvation, Conversion, Justification, Redemption, Sabbath, Eternal Life, Heaven. It is said whosoever speaks these words, in due relations, speaks the word and will of God. Such words, it is said, will constitute the base of that message that shall herald the coming

of the Kingdom of Heaven in the Earth. These are the words of the science of theology. These are the sacred vocabulary.

## **2.—The Science of Economics.**

**But there is another science—a lowly, common thing—the Science of Economics.** If you intend to be alive in the next quarter of a century you may just as well learn that word—Economics. The word is derived from two Greek words which mean the law or method of housekeeping. Surely it is a long drop from the dome of Heaven to a scullery, from the elysium of eternity to a coal-shed, from the doctrine of holiness to a grocery bill! The word Economics has been retained for our use, not with reference to the housekeeping of the family, but with reference to the national housekeeping. The idea is that the population is the family; the land is the larder, and cellar and garden and field; the vast machinery is the hoe, the spade, and the axe,—that is, the Equipment of Industry. And the Science of Economics seeks to ask and answer the question: Given so many millions of people, so many millions of acres, so much energy and water and steam and factory and machine, how can we keep house together, **guaranteeing to everyone a chance to labour freely without servitude? Give to each the product of his labour as his natural reward? Make it impossible for the few to control the life of the many? Abolish unnatural, degrading poverty in the midst of abundance, and secure to every man, woman, and child the material conditions upon which he or she may live a complete, happy, wholesome, free, and full human life.** This is the business of the Science of Economics. And I say unto you that the World-Deliverance, the Messianic Advent, that is at hand, the greatest in all human history, comes using the terms, phrases, and themes of this lowly Science of Economics. This gospel of the larder, scullery, coal-house, tool-yard, and field becomes the message of the Son of Man.

### **3.—The Spirituality of Materialism.**

The science of theology and ethics is declared to be spiritual, pertaining to the highest things in life, the ideal, the eternal things. The Science of Economics is declared to be materialistic, a gospel of the belly, pertaining to the fleeting things of time and sense. The vocabulary of the one is sacred, that of the other secular. And yet I say unto you that the Messianic Movement at this juncture of human history comes to us using the lowly, commonplace vocabulary of materialism.

Such words as land, steam, electricity, machinery, wages, hours, shillings, pence; labour and leisure; half-timers, infant mortality, sweating; farming, mining, weaving, sailing, railroading; bread, blankets, boots; clothing, coal, rent—these and their kin are the words that can now carry the freightage of the divine meanings to the future of the human race. The Messiah starts with these words; they are at hand; **He does not coin them; He finds them by following the blood-drips of a crucified humanity.** By using these words in due relation to the birth-throes of the race, He wields the two-edged sword of the Spirit. These are the words of the Science of Economics. **By no other medium can the Christ-principle effect an entrance into our actual human affairs.**

The Messianic age does not come primarily with a New Theology or a new code of ethics, but with a new social vision for an emancipated humanity, and that social vision has no other vocabulary into which it can be translated, except the words of the Science of Economics; on no other vocabulary can the forces for human emancipation of this era be floated.

These words are commonplace, out-of-doors, home-spun—not Sunday-like, but secular, matter-of-fact, raw, realistic. When you pronounce them you smell the sweat of human bodies in the slaveries of Capitalism, not the cool, stone-like odour of ecclesiastical architecture. As you utter them you hear, not the valved



intonation of the priest in the conduct of ritual and ceremony, but the roar of machinery and the surge of the tide of humanity in the marts of trade. You hear the spindle and the shovel, the hammer and the lever.

The Messianic Movement comes, as it always came, outside the temple. The Son of Man cometh not only when you do not expect Him, but in a manner you do not expect Him. No stained glass, no stately ceremony, no pomp of dignitaries, no artificially preserved dogmas; but leaping like a Phoenix out of the decay and ashes of Capitalism, bursting as water out of the face of the rock, flaming forth like a volcano from unseen terrestrial fires; **so cometh the mighty Son of Man in the great world-wide Socialist and Labour Movement—the Word of the Lord pouring through the truths of Economic Science.**

#### **4.—The Truth that makes Free.**

The truth that the people shall know, and knowing be free, cannot be stated in abstract theological formulæ, new or old, nor can it be taught in the detail of a new ethical code. The truth that shall make them free arises out of human need, human suffering, human struggle, the human passion for freedom, the human urge for completeness of life. The truth is not a speculation, a statement, or a doctrine at all. It is a deed, a social act, a way out. We would be more exact not to use the word truth as a noun, but as a verb. **Thus truth-ing would consist in willing the way that makes men free.** We should be saved from the fallacy of thinking that we were of the truth because our speculations were exact and our doctrines orthodox. Jesus said, "I am the Truth," but this was accompanied by "I am the Way," and the way is the way of the abundant life. **Truth-ing is moving upon the way that leads to life in all its fulness.**

The wrongs of Capitalism, its colossal lie, its brutal injustice, its cowardly heaping in the midst of starva-

tion and penury, constitute the vast negative background against which the positive new revelation of a free humanity is silhouetted. The background remains until the revelation is read and interpreted and acted upon.

Order is heaven's first law. Capitalism is the vast social anarchy that we suffer for a time. But the time of this ignorance is winked at no longer. Men are commanded everywhere to repent. To repent is to begin to truth. It is an act of the will. **Economics direct the social will in the way. In that Socialist way is life and freedom for the people.**

The Science of Economics reminds one of the man-fish, Oannes of Chaldea, mentioned by Victor Hugo. This man-fish had two heads—at the top the head of a man, below the head of a hydra. He drank up chaos by his lower gullet, and re-vomited it on the earth through the upper mouth in the form of dreadful knowledge. So the Science of Economics feeds into its hyrda-head the dung-heaps, the charnel-houses, and filth-alleys, and hell-holes of Capitalism ; it gobbles up the horrible chaos of wealth and poverty, of overwork and unemployment, of vacant lands and reeking tenements ; it swallows the colossal counterfeits of religion, and its respectable caricatures on real righteousness ; it devours its plagues of charity and almsgiving, and then vomits out of the mouth of man the dreadful knowledge of a true Science of Human Society, a social message of hope and deliverance for a weary race, **a Messianic announcement that the kingdom of Capitalism shall be no more, that a new age of justice and human brotherhood is at hand.**

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### III.

#### **ETHICS—BROTHERHOOD.**

All this sounds like crass materialism. All this sounds as if man lived by bread alone, and needed no

other substance out of the words or creations which the Father hath given us in the plethora of the universe.

That the Son of Man should come speaking of the tenements in Liverpool rather than homes in heaven ; of the rags of the poor, instead of the white robes of the redeemed ; of the vast acreage of counties and countries, instead of the fields of glory ; of the hells in which the crowded peoples jostle one another in New York and Paris and London, instead of Satan's eternal torment ; of just wages for factory workers and farm labourers, instead of the wages of sin ; of shovels and spindles, instead of harps and crowns ; of labour statistics, the number of half-timers, and the army of the unemployed, instead of the roll-call in the grand finale in a world beyond the sky ; that the Son of Man should come questioning the titles to landed estates, and demanding land nationalisation, instead of pleasantly assuring rich deacons and millionaire elders of their titles clear to mansions in the skies—surely, surely, this is a total surrender of the ideal, a total abandonment to the abyss of the flesh and sense. Surely this is a surrender to the mud-god, twin brother to the mammon-god of Capitalism. But not so. Not at all. The very opposite is the truth.

### **1.—The Cry for Bread is the Cry for Fulness of Life.**

**This gospel of bread that meets the age-long cry of humanity is the only root out of which the mighty stalk of human freedom and social justice can grow,** and on this stalk alone can the uttermost and divinest blossoms and fruitage of human life be born.

The cry for bread is the cry for life. Bread means loaves, to be sure. But it also means boots and books and blankets. It means education and music and art. It means home and friends. It means travel and fellowship. The cry for bread is the cry for life, and all that life can mean.

But **life** is not possible without **labour** and the products of labour. And labour cannot be put forth except on **land or the products of land**. But the corn and cotton and wool and coal and iron cannot be developed and distributed to advantage except by **machinery**. And machinery cannot be utilised economically except by the **co-operation of the multitude**.

But this struggle of the individual for life, in the compulsory co-operation of all which civilisation entails, precipitates each and every one of us into basic social and industrial relations which must be made just and brotherly and good, or all life is a nightmare of deadly struggle and strife and pain.

**For be it remembered, it is our fundamental, constant, and abiding social and economic relations with one another that make for freedom, and justice, and human perfection ;** not our incidental, or voluntary, or passing personal relations. It is in our week-day relations in the battle for bread, not our Sunday relations in religion and worship, that the real measure of our righteousness is manifest. The week-day relations register our freedom of life.

Now, the Science of Economics, which the Messianic spirit rides upon in the social revolution, gets its depth, and power, and glory, and sacredness, because of **the incalculable sacredness of the human lives with which it is concerned**, and for which it comes to bring industrial freedom. There is only one sacred thing beneath the stars. Not churches, Bibles, constitutions, laws, doctrines, but human life. Whatever hinders, harms, hurts, enslaves, degrades one of these little ones—that is the anti-Christ, that is the wrong. Whatever helps or emancipates human life, stands human life up, without a master and without a slave, in the freedom to be all that God meant it to be—that is the right, the good, the true. That is the coming of Christ. And economics, with its social investigation, its statistics, its impeachment of Capitalism, and its heralding of



Socialism, gathers its sacredness, and rises to its supremely sacred mission, because at this juncture of history it is the only beast on which the people can ride to freedom. It is the only science that can organise our social and industrial institutions in justice and brotherhood.

No set of subjects can carry the new teaching of social righteousness, except the subjects the Socialist movement precipitates—the Science of Economics. Face the raw and terrible facts of Capitalism ; seek for the abolition of those wrongs and injustices of Capitalism ; seek for that truth which shall make the people free—and all the deepest ethical conceptions and convictions, all the rich feelings of the human heart, all the deep urge of the Soul of Man will be released and called into action.

## **2.—The New Social Conscience.**

This world-wide Socialist movement of our times, in laying its emphasis upon land, machinery, products,—bread, labour, and life—is precipitating upon the conscience of the world a deeper and more searching gospel of social righteousness than has ever yet received a hearing on this planet. The human race was never summoned to such a deep, far-reaching repentance as that to which the Socialist calls us.

This Socialist movement, in talking and writing and voting about bread, bread, bread, is interpreting a value, and sacredness, and ultimate significance to human beings that mammonism never knew and ecclesiasticism has forgotten. But this value we cannot secure or release except through a fundamental readjustment of our economic and industrial life. Without any pretensions to be primarily a teacher of righteousness, coming only as a herald of a Social Revolution in the manner of our bread-getting, **the Socialist movement is already the prophet and the**

**interpreter of the new social conscience to the race.** The Socialist movement is the most universal and synthetic gospel of social righteousness the world has ever known.

The Church that bears the name of Christ is supposed to be the moral and spiritual instructor of the race, but any Christianity that is at peace with the cruel and unpardonable injustices of Capitalism has betrayed all that Christ stands for to the mammon-gods. Indeed, to the extent that the religious bodies of civilisation are becoming permeated with the Socialist ideal, with the Socialist attack on Capitalism, and the Socialist programme for a just order of society, and are repenting of their complicity with the crime of Capitalism, to that extent even the Church is becoming moralised, her life quickened, and her vision clarified. **It is not for the Church to spiritualise the Socialist movement.** It is for the Church to be called back from her flirtation and harlotry with the money-gods, and thus to be spiritualised by contact with the motive and spirit and programme of Socialism.

### **3.—The Spiritual Significance of Economic Conditions.**

Thus we see that out of the facts and forces, the poverty and tragedy of our economic and industrial life, in the struggle for bread, the Socialist vision gives new meaning to all that men call good by disclosing the social and economic base of ethics. The simplest look will reveal this.

There is not a great evil in the world that is not fostered by Capitalism. Covetousness, "which is idolatry," tyranny, subordination of the very souls of men, ruthless disregard of human life, are nurtured by Capitalism. The love of money, once declared to be the root of all evil, becomes almost elevated to a virtue under the hypnotism of Capitalism. "Laying up treasure on earth," one of the most simple exhibitions of pure mammonism, is sanctified, praised, and accepted

by existing Christianity, and out of these treasures thus laid up they replenish their ecclesiastical exchequers. Human strife is glorified by Capitalism in the form of competition. And nations armed to the teeth unleash the dogs of war, involving helpless populations in all the horrors of warfare, for no other earthly purpose than to widen the markets of the great capitalists.

**On the other hand, there is not a good work or noble effort of the race that is not impeded, or even frustrated, by Capitalism.** Our prisons fill, our insane asylums are crowded, prostitution multiplies in the streets, the home is stricken, hospitals and almshouses are crowded. Upon every philanthropy of sisters of charity, Salvation Army lasses, and charity organisations, demands are heaped that they cannot possibly respond to. The Socialist movement, with its Science of Economics, is the new philanthropy—it is that comprehensive social programme of good-will which comes not to alleviate, but to prevent the wholesale poverty, suffering, and degradation inflicted by Capitalism.

**Even the work of converting individual souls to any spiritual life is turned into a caricature of real salvation by the prevailing ideals, maxims, and practices of Capitalism.** No religious body in existence demands their converts to renounce the world of Capitalism. Is it not a spiritual tragedy to see the evangelist and the preacher of the Gospel open the consciences of souls about the merest trifles, offer them peace through believing, and leave them as unawakened concerning the colossal anti-Christ of Capitalism as if they lived on another planet? And their converts go on straining at gnats of personal sin, and along with their teachers swallow whole camels of social and industrial iniquity. Nay, more. They appeal to Scripture, and use the very name of Christ to sustain this unholy system. Thus individual salvation halts for power and depth and a mission until it becomes a call to the soul to lay down life for the sheep. And when these converts

begin to lay their lives down for the Church, they must become Christian Revolutionists, and interrupt the wolves that drive the sheep from the pastures, and lay the lambs down for profit.

#### **4.—Social Justice—the First Righteousness.**

The first general fundamental righteousness is social justice. Concerning this I must make myself unmistakably plain. The tragedy of our present-day Christianity is its moral and intellectual ignorance of social justice. The moment you attempt to uncover the social injustices of Capitalism, the Christian, the philanthropist, the pietist begins to justify his own personal relations to buyers, or sellers, or employés or tenants. **His conscience is individualistic.** It has never been baptised into the social fact, and the social sorrow, and social wrong. Permit me to be plain. There is none of us good, none of us just, none of us holy, none of us kind. None of us—not one—who is Christian. I care not how perfect your personal life may be, how kind and generous, how good-natured, how faithful, how fair; I care not how religious and devoted and prayerful; I care not what rapt spiritual experiences you think you enjoy, what exaltation of feeling, what ecstasy of soul. **You are a social sinner!** You are a personal actor in the social injustice. You partake of the greed and despotism and cruelty of Capitalism. You cannot individually escape. I do not wish to speak harshly. I only wish you to think clearly.

Social justice or injustice is that which is incarnated in social institutions, of which we are all partakers as citizens. As a unit in the social body, you are guilty with its guilt, or saved with its salvation. Social justice is that which does not depend on the mercy or goodwill of certain individuals, however good. It is an atmosphere in which all breathe.



That your child may attend the public school, that you may get your letters through the post office, that you may walk along the highway—these are not by the mercy of schoolmasters, postal officials, or landlords. It is your social right on equal terms with any other man. It is a goodness, a rightness, a justice that is socialised in social institutions of which you are a member, a factor, a doer, a partaker.

So it is with social injustice. As long as Capitalism remains, with its landlordism and monopoly, and exploitation of labour, you are a sinner in its sins ; you are unjust in its injustice ; you are cruel with its cruelty ; you are brutal with its monopoly. You crowd the people into city slums ; you sweat the labour of multitudes. You drive the unemployed from city to city ; you are an accomplice with the long, long crime of Capitalism.

I do not say this to accuse you. I say this to point out to you your duty, that you may repent of this social sin and bear it away. The human soul that refuses to acknowledge his complicity with this social crime, and seeks to justify himself by his personal, isolate goodness, may become a righteous Pharisee, but he cannot become the Messianic soul taking upon himself the race sin, and bearing it away in his efforts with his brothers to establish social justice upon the earth, in just, social institutions.

**No man liveth unto himself. All the world serves all the world.** Who picked the tea, or gathered the salt, or planted the wheat, or ground the flour, or made the cutlery on your dinner-table ? Not simply the cook who prepared your meal, and the maid who served it, but **the whole world of human labour waited upon you** in the vast plexus of modern industry. Sailors, storm-tossed on the hurricane-deck ; engineers, flying through the night over the rail ; labourers working till their backs gave out ; shop-assistants, battling for a decent livelihood ; little, pale-faced factory girls,

spinning and weaving for you ; miners, deep in the bowels of the earth, risking life ; office girls, clicking typewriters, for long hours and low wages, thousands of miles from where you sit—all of these, and tens of millions more, daily pour out their life-blood in the labour markets of modern industry for **YOU**.

And the social injustice, the industrial oppression, the commercial tyranny, the economic slavery, they all endure because of the fundamental wrong of Capitalism, I lay at your door. "Thou art the man !"

We are members of one another. The Science of Economics reveals our economic sin as a vast, social cancer, preying upon the social body. Capitalism is the supreme lie of the world. In it we are all involved. How can any speak truth ? Our other little lies within that huge lie are all little tiddle-de-winks. Our imagined honesty within that gigantic dishonesty is a trifle. Our very kindness in alms-giving and charity within that colossal wrong to the people is a farce. Our keen scent for petty crime in the midst of this all-enveloping and respectable crime against humanity is absolutely tragical. Our imagined "peace" of soul in the midst of the horrible strifes and antagonisms of competition is a spiritual opiate. It does, indeed, "pass understanding." The best piety and the most exalted religion of our timid lives, lived in cowardly silence without protest against the vast, wholesale sin of Capitalism, needs to be repented of. And except your righteousness exceed that kind of individualistic righteousness, which knows not, nor repents not, of its social sin, you shall in no wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, either individually or socially.

**The man who does not want economic justice in the use of land and machinery for his fellow-man wants nothing for his fellow-man.** I care not how loud his prayers, or how exalted his religious ecstasy. The first simple demand of the Messianic movement is that the

workers of the world shall be secure in the chance to labour, and secure in the product of their labour.

No man can say he wants something higher for men than that if he does not want that at least. The social righteousness preached by the Social Revolution is a lowly thing—a first thing—an initial step in real righteousness. There is still room for the highest, but it must be built on this base of the pyramid of righteousness. Just as the lords and priests and ruling-classes of the world in all ages have made the great mass of the workers the base of the social pyramid, so, now, the Gospel of Labour makes simple Social Justice in the use of land and machinery the base of the pyramid of social righteousness. You can build nothing on top until that base is laid. Let us not joke longer with God, thus cheating our own souls and defrauding the race.

Social justice is not an option in the Kingdom of God. **It is basic, primal, first.** The man who wants it not, the Church which wants it not, want nothing of real righteousness, however devoted to ritual or exalted by emotion they may be. **It is time that judgment began at the house of God in this matter.** Your sneer at the Socialist movement will come back upon you. Beware, lest you be found rejecting the Messiah. Beware, lest your righteousness be discovered to be filthy rags. Beware, lest you may hear that stern judgment, "Inasmuch as you permit Capitalism thus to maltreat these, the least of my brethren, thus ye treat Me." "Depart ; I know you not."

Out of this root of Economics, then, stuck deep into the very mud and muck and manure of the world-life, grows this mighty stalk of Justice and Industrial Freedom for all people. It is for this cause that the Messiah cometh voicing His message in the vocabulary of economic science rather than in the dogmas of theology, codes of ethics, or creeds of Christianity. This is why the Son of Man is seen standing in the rough, uncultured crowds of the toilers in their struggle to be

free, rather than among the temple-worshippers in their silent reverie and stolid complacency in the presence of social injustice.

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#### IV.

### SPIRIT—ILLUMINATION.

“But man does not live by bread alone.” Man is the Infinite incarnate. He must live by every word—every possibility of his being—that proceedeth from the mouth of Eternal Reality. There is a divine meaning to human life that baffles interpretation. Man, as we know him, is something to be surpassed. Is there anything greater in all the universe than that which is inherent, undisclosed, occult, hidden in the Soul of Man? Did the Author of the Universe have a particular alien sort of spirit stuff, different from the Ultimate Being, out of which this willing, knowing, loving Man was made? Is Love the one, same, eternal, substance everywhere? Is Life, Life, wherever found, the same—the Eternal? **There is nothing to God—to the Absolute Reality—that is not the inheritance of man.** “He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father,” said He, who is the first-born among many brethren.

#### 1.—Socialism makes way for Man.

Majestic and terrible are the issues of the Socialist movement. Underneath Capitalism there lie awful explosives—sunk there by seers, sages, and saviours, who loved the average man, and in loving, found him, glorified him, and heralded his coming. In impeaching Capitalism and proclaiming Socialism, we shall “touch off” some of those deep and awful revelations of the divine significance of every human life. The Socialist movement is like fire; red, real, consuming, forcing itself upon the senses with realistic might, but



coming forth from locked-up invisible areas, and leaping in lambent flames, to invisible realms, to unseen meanings, to spiritual significances, and to the occult Freedoms of that which is beyond man, as Capitalism knows him.

Socialism starts out with the most intensely practical, matter-of-fact, and material considerations of Bread and Labour, **and rises to the highest reach of vision concerning the cosmic meaning of man.**

It is as if we began with a skeleton—cold, rattling, forbidding,—a bony framework of statistics, and economic laws and forces. But straightway the flesh appears upon that skeleton, the heart pulsates with blood, the eye glows with light, and we see the meanings of Social Brotherhood, the Gospel of the Social Man. And then, behold! The enfleshed frame throbs with spirit—the transcendent—it is the Eternal incarnate—disclosing angelic splendours!

Thus Socialism enumerating untilled acres, calling the roll of the slain labourers, measuring the power of electric energy, calculating the speed of machines and the powers of labour and the products thereof, is precipitating a World-Revolution. But the revolution comes in order to make standing room for this god—that man is—that every last one of us may live out in varied and beautiful expression, the ultimate meanings of His Being.

## **2.—We await an Illumined Race.**

**The thing we have crawling the earth is not man.** It doth not yet appear what we shall be. We have had the saint-man, the soldier-man, the priest-man, the capitalist-man, the slave-man—all of these are caricatures of man. But Man has not yet appeared.

Victor Hugo makes a list of those minds that reached the hundredth degree of intellectual power. There are just fourteen in the list. Dr. Bucke says that an ordinary drawing-room would comfortably contain all

the men who in the centuries have attained that Spiritual Illumination which he calls Cosmic Consciousness. Galton declares that only one out of 4,000 of the English-speaking people exhibits any sign of real genius.

What can we expect? We have had a slave world, filled with brutal soldiers, whining, drivelling priests, or cruel, tyrannous, persecuting ecclesiastics, non-conformist money-grubbers, droves upon droves of intellectual and physical slaves. Ezekiel sat in the street corner and ate dung to dramatise the mental and moral state of any man who would consent to servitude—to own any man as master. With the moral life of man whipped with fear for centuries under the handcuffs of authority; with the spiritual life of the soul still poured into sickening, mildewed moulds; with the intellect still throttled, or abased, afraid to speak in pulpit or press, in public or private, lest the bread be taken away; with the bodies of men exiled from the natural bosom of the earth and locked in the nastiness of Capitalism's sordid cities—how can we expect the glorious Being, Man, to emerge. He is still a grub in the pupa. He has yet to put forth the beauteous wings of his intellectual and cosmic life. He is a bulb—not yet the bloom. **Man is in the womb of civilisation. The birth-hour approaches. The Son of Man cometh!**

This Son of Man is something greater than anything history has disclosed. Even the great specimens that have been thrust forth in such severe isolation in the paths of history seem one-sided. The great heroes, conquerors, sages, and saviors but hint to us of the fulness yet to be, in full-orbed glory. Saints disgust with their asceticisms and voluntary poverty and other worldliness. Alexander and Cæsar and Napoleon, though full of daring, and incarnating cosmic fearlessness, offend us with an unnecessary ruthlessness of procedure. Our philosophers are dreamers; their great ideas do not demonstrate in powerful volition. Our

social revolutionists are wearisome fanatics ; they have not that serenity and poise that we expect Truth to display. Our Nature-lovers, our Thoreaus, would woo us to isolation and sequestration. Our very loftiest spiritual teaching offers us a species of thralldom, and invites us to obedience, and only slaves obey. The utmost reach of science presents a world in eternal chains of law. But the Soul of Man transcends all of these. The Soul will finally refuse to be saintly, to be ruled, to be dominated. The Soul refuses to be inferior to anything or anybody anywhere in all the universe. The Soul refuses isolation to Nature or from Nature. The whole of Nature is a play-house to the Soul. And the Soul ever and ever devours its gods and eats up its worlds of laws and principles. The Soul of the Son of Man is the Eternally Free. Its dream is its true reality. Freedom, not only from all barrier, but to all expression, is the natural atmosphere and climate for the Son of Man. Slavery, servitudes, bondages, victimage shall be no more ! A Free Humanity has never yet been—but the hour cometh !

Man is the tree that beareth all manner of fruits. Man is a miracle-worker, a sage, a brother, a lover. He is musician, artist, medium, voice of God ; an Apollo for Beauty, a Hercules for Labour, a Jesus for Brother-Love ; Joy-bringer, Spirit-taught divinity, Illuminatus !

The Socialist movement comes to plant that tree which man is in Freedom and in Brotherhood—and give that tree, for the first time in human history, a chance to shed its ripe, rich fruit of illumined, inspired, and emancipated existence. The beast is the ass of Economics—but the goal is the Messianic Age. All Hail !

## Moses : The Greatest of Labour Leaders.

**M**R. WILSON began his address\* by a humorous reference to the number of tribes, clans, and nations to which he claimed membership. He frequently told his English audiences that he was born a British subject under the Union Jack. When he crossed the border into Scotland he assured them that his mother's people originally came from Scotland, and were strongly marked with Scotch characteristics, and especially of the religious type—for they were Covenanters. "The Irish claim my streak of wit—and they are right"—said the speaker, "because, for generations my father's people lived in Ireland—and my grandfather's tongue was heavy with Irish brogue and light with Irish wit." When he (Mr. Wilson) went among the French he claimed kinship because before his mother's people settled in Scotland as Covenanters they were Huguenots, having been driven from France in the religious persecutions. He had been on a speaking tour in Canada just before coming to England, and there he was quite at home for he had been actually born and reared in Ontario. The only country in which he had spoken his message where he could not claim immediate race connection was in the United States. The only real American was the North American Indian. All other Americans were immigrants or the descendants of immigrants. On that score he could claim to be as good an American as any.

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\* This pamphlet is printed from the report of Mr. Wilson's address just as it appeared in "The Halifax Labour News," June, 1908.



## I.

**SOCIALISM INTERNATIONAL.**

“ But this humorous reference to my kith and kin and country,” continued the speaker, “ is an introductory word to the idea of internationalism which is at the base of the whole Socialist movement. By claiming many countries, I claim all ; by claiming all, I claim none in particular. The Socialist is an Internationalist. The struggles of the working class are the same the world over. Their problem is one. Their common sufferings unite them in a common cause. **And the next great unifying movement of the globe is Socialism—the Hope of the World.** Jap and Russ, Hindoo and Englishman, Frank and German, Canadian, American, Australian—all one for the International Co-operative Commonwealth.”

**1.—A World-Wide Faith.**

Here is the great solvent for our religious strifes. Oriental faith and Western religion, Protestant and Catholic, Christian and agnostic, materialist and spiritual idealist—all find in the Socialist movement a blood-red current of the ultimate Good, and the Great Idea—Freedom, Justice, Brotherhood—the Kingdom of the Good in the actual facts of our common life. The prayer of Socialism is the cry of the people for bread, for opportunity, for abundant life. Its priests are the heroic men and women among the working class who are seeking to organise the workers for their final emancipation from age-long slavery. The temples of Socialism are not made with hands. The sacred bodies of the people— these are the sacred temples.

**2.—The Gospel of Humanity.**

This great gospel of humanity is the swift Herald of Justice. It is the sweet message of Human Brotherhood. It is Lucifer, “ swift with his angels out of

heaven propelled " coming with light to plant " the Seeds of the World to be." Socialism is the great, raw, elemental Incarnation of the Spirit of Democracy, in World-History, and the Spirit of Comradeship in the common life. **Without ritual, ceremony, temple, priest, or dogma,** Socialism comes to fulfil the word of the Carpenter who said, " By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, that ye love one another." Socialism comes to fulfil also the word of that other brother " who was not proud of his songs, but of the measureless ocean of love within him—and freely poured it forth," who said, " I will make the continent indissoluble ; and I will make the most splendid race the sun ever yet shone upon ; I will make divine magnetic lands, **with the love of Comrades,** with the lifelong love of Comrades."

### 3.—Socialism—the New Unity.

As Socialism comes to give unity to the Working-Classes of the whole world and thus to dissolve their historic antagonisms and make them brothers and comrades in a Common Cause, so the Socialist Movement is the Heir, Incarnation, and Sum of the historical heritage of the race in Literature, Art, and Science, in Religion and Democratic Government. It is the net plus of Human Progress and Prophecy. **Nothing that has made for Human Freedom is alien to us.** All revolutions that have emancipated the race are historically present in the Socialist movement. Our pulse registers them. They find that which they prophesied incarnate in our militant activity.

All the great seers, sages, and saviors, lovers of Man, and martyrs for Freedom, belong to us. We are their incarnation. What they lived and died for is what we live and die for, brought up-to-date, throbbing in the 20th century. And seeing we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, we now run with patience the race that is set before us.

As with the great Souls so with the Great Movements for Freedom. They all meet in this mighty Socialism as the tributaries of the Mississippi all pour into one majestic stream, the Father of Waters. **Socialism will sum up and make secure and give expression to all the blood-bought heritage of the race**—Religious Liberty, Freedom of Thought, Freedom of Person, Freedom of Speech, Political Freedom, including "Votes for Women," Freedom of Soul, without master, without slave—Liberty, Fraternity, Equality.

#### **4.—The Great Souls are Ours.**

Socialism being thus the plexus of Human Desire and Passion, the sacred ark of Human Freedom, and the Gospel of Human Brotherhood, it has the right to exploit for its propaganda the lives of Heroes, Emancipators, and Martyrs, who have made paths for the feet of man from bondage to liberty. It is for us to expound the life and labours of the Gracchi, of Spartacus, of Bruno, of Hampden, of Columbus.

**The heroic soul of Jesus, the Hero of the Common People, the Lover of the Mob—belongs to us.** Ecclesiastical Christianity, bolstering up the Mammon-Gods of Profit and Power in Capitalism, has forfeited its right to the name and the Message of the Carpenter of Galilee. He belongs to us. He who called greasy fishermen to his side, and gave his great vision of Human Brotherhood into the hearts of "unlearned and ignorant men"—He will not mind our blunt phrase and broken sentences.

The work of Moses belongs to us. Eliminating those elements that are purely local and racial, and seeking for those essentially human and universal elements in the work of Moses, it is the Social Movement that to-day inherits the spirit that led that great Israelite from Horeb to the Court of Pharaoh. It is the Socialist Movement that utters to-day the modern cry, "Let my People Go": **"Say unto the People that they go**

**forward."** It is the Socialist Movement that to-day inspires the working class, smarting under the task-masters of the Modern Pharaohs, and which presents to them a Program and a goal for their deliverance.

The Socialist movement gets repeatedly baptised with a richer and deeper consciousness of its significance to the race-life, as it gathers up the total desire and passion and hope of mankind into itself. Three great historic peoples have poured their influence into the stream of Modern life—the Greek, the Roman, and the Jew. And if we are indebted to the Greek for culture, and the Roman for administration, to the Jewish people, the Jewish Scriptures, and the influence of Jesus, the Jew, **we owe a debt for conceptions of Social Justice, and Social Righteousness and the ultimate values of Human Personality.**

### **5.—A Bible Argument for Socialism.**

It is my purpose this evening to present a Socialist argument, from the story of that Ancient Labour Movement, chronicled in the Book of Exodus in the Old Testament, and particularly from the work of Moses, that greatest of historic Labour Leaders and Statesmen.

Time will not permit me to draw the parallel in detail at every point. But let me give you the main points in which the great world-wide movement of the working-class of the present time corresponds with that of the days of Moses :

1. These people suffered **industrial oppression and social injustice** at the hands of the Pharaohs—Egyptian bondage then, the Injustice of Capitalism now.

2. There came the summons for the man Moses to organise these people for a General Strike, and to deliver them out of their slavery into Freedom. **The Moses of the Working-Class of to-day is the Socialist Spirit, the Socialist Message, and the Socialist Move-**



**ment**, which demands, as Moses did, "Let my people go." "Say unto the people that they go forward into a good land, a land flowing with milk and honey."

3. They went forth into that land. They reached the land of Canaan. This is before us as Socialists. The Canaan of modern wage-slaves is the Co-operative Commonwealth, when the working-class shall have elected their representatives to establish the Right to Work and Co-operative Industry—the Socialization of all means of life and labour needed to make the people free from the Capitalist System.

4. Moses' great work was Social Legislation, and the immediate Social Program of Moses concerned (1) Land, (2) Interest, (3) Tools—and these correspond with the movement of **Labour to-day to Socialise Land, Capital, and Machinery**. The parallel is striking and full of instruction and inspiration for us of the 20th century.

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## II.

### THE OPPRESSION OF THE PEOPLE.

Nothing but the most extreme religious pre-occupation and deep-seated spiritual individualism could keep any reader of the Bible from seeing that the whole marvellous history of the Jews, and their contribution to Spiritual Idealism, culminating in the person and mission of Jesus, is **directly traceable to a great Labour Movement**, a Social Revolution, an Economic Emancipation. Christian preachers and workers attack the Socialist Movement as a "base, materialistic movement," neglecting the higher and

holier things of life. Clergymen warn their young people from the gross materialism of Socialism. The Church boasts of the Holy Bible, of its wonderful poetry, the depths of righteous fervour in Old Testament prophecy. The Church glorifies Moses, Joshua, Elijah, Amos, Isaiah, and Jesus. And modern critics have told us of the uncrowned kings in Art, Literature, Science, and Government in recent centuries, such as Spinoza in philosophy, Mendelssohn in Music, Marx and La Salle in economics—all Jews. **But the Church forgets and our litterateurs forget that the base and beginning of the whole after-product of the Jewish people, was their Economic Emancipation,** a Social Revolution; a re-adjustment of the means by which they made their bread. As I have said many times: Freedom first. Industrial freedom first, and the rest follows. Nothing, I say, but wilful ecclesiastical blindness and a religious individualism, unwarranted by either the Old or the New Testament, could prevent the simplest mind from seeing this fundamental truth. This is the gross materialism of Socialism!

### **1.—An Old Story of Industrial Oppression.**

These Jews were a horde of dishonoured, despised, and degraded slaves. Whatever social excellence they might have had from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, had long since been worked out of them in the slave-pits of the Pharaohs. As long as the ruling-class needed an abundance of cheap labour they permitted them to multiply. When their numbers became so great that they might become strong enough to revolt against their masters, then the rulers introduced a policy of infant mortality by violence against the male children. They also increased their burdens to still further take the spirit out of them.

It makes your blood boil even now to read the Exodus account of this injustice. It is a plain story of industrial oppression by a set of self-chosen tyrants,

dictators, and lords of the people—a ruling-class, living in splendour and idleness and extravagance on the product of the toil of the helpless working-class.

## 2.—Listen to the Bible Narrative.

“ They did set over them task masters to afflict them with their burdens. . . . The Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour. And they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field ; all the service wherein they made them serve was with rigour **(and no dictionary will ever reveal what that word “rigour” meant)**. And Pharaoh said, ‘ Ye make them rest from their burdens, and he commanded the taskmasters and officers, saying, Ye shall no more give the people straw to make brick, as heretofore, let them go and gather straw for themselves, and the tale of bricks, which they did make heretofore, ye shall lay upon them ; ye shall not diminish ought thereof, for they be idle . . . . let then more work be laid upon the men, that they may labour therein, and let them not regard the vain words (!) of Moses.’ **(That sounds like a warning of Capitalism to the working-class against the teachings of Socialism !)** . . . . And the taskmasters speeded them up, saying, Fulfil your works, your daily tasks, as when there was straw. And the foremen selected from the children of Israel were beaten because they did not get the full tale of work out of the under-slaves . . . . and Pharaoh said, ‘ Ye are idle ! ye are idle ! ’ ” **(What a modern sound that has !)**

## 3.—The Suffering of the Slaves.

Let me read to you the account of this industrial oppression given recently by an archæologist :

“ Here in Egypt are the tombs of Kings, stupendous monuments not alone of monarchical glory and pride, but of the reckless waste of innumerable human lives. Deep in the sands dug

a myriad slaves, ignorant of everything save the stern necessity of yielding up every bit of strength in their bodies, and every last gleam of intelligence in their minds, to the demands of the King. In the quarries, on the roads, and on the walls for scores of years there toiled these thousands of men, wageless and half-fed, overworked and scourged, sick, dizzy, and exhausted. The only hospital they knew was the taskmaster's whip, which stimulated into one last, agonised effort, the exhausted muscles of a used-up body or the frenzied movement of a reeling brain. Whether the glory of monarchs demanded the speedy completion of some expression of his selfish pride, or a too rapidly growing race must be reduced to manageable proportions without massacre, the whole picture of that useless, grinding toil testifies to an **ugly, wicked contempt for human life."**

This extract will help us to get the historical setting of the Social and Economic Emancipation wrought by Moses.

These overworked, under-fed slaves were broken in heart. They lacked spirit to revolt against such conditions. They lacked the intelligence necessary for organised resistance. They sank down in despair in the face of the power of Pharaoh. They were too timid to act separately, too ignorant to combine. Where could they go? What could they do? They did not know enough geography to think of Canaan. And apathy and anguish overcame them, as it is written, "The children of Israel sighed by reason of their bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of their bondage."

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### III.

#### MOSES, THE DELIVERER, MEETS GOD.

When this brutal Pharaoh issued his edict to slay the male children, one slave woman hid her babe in the



bulrushes, where Pharaoh's daughter came to bathe. By a clever ruse of mother-love this slave woman got herself appointed nurse to her own child. But Moses became the adopted child of the princess. He was reared in the king's court, educated in the palace, and instructed in all the learning of the Egyptians, in the University at On.

**But he never forgot his own class.** This son of a slave, reared in the royal courts, when he was grown looked out upon the sufferings of his slave brothers and sisters. He was moved with indignation, and one day the beating of his fellows went too far, and in a fit of anger he killed an Egyptian taskmaster. For this Pharaoh put a price upon his head, and

### **1.—Moses Fled to Midian.**

There Moses pondered over the terrible wrongs and sufferings of his people. His propaganda of the deed against individual hirelings of the system had done no good. When an educated man of the temper of Moses was led to violently smite this slave-driver down, we may be sure his very soul had been wrought to a high pitch of feeling concerning his brethren. And for all the long years he tended sheep in Midian, he had time to think it all out. "How can my brethren be delivered from the slavery in Egypt?"—that was his question.

Moses, as you observe, was **a gross materialist**. Why did he not invent some pretty rose-water "gospel" to assure his people that no matter how long they worked, and how wretchedly they were fed and clad and housed, and no matter how early they died, they and their children, if they would be "good" and "content" with the station in which God had placed them, would eventually get a mansion in the skies, and a white robe and a harp in the grand orchestra. No **Moses was a man**. He was not a semi-male and semi-female entity whose soul could be satisfied to see his people rot on earth, and take their joy in hopes of heaven. He was a man—as I have said. He had red

blood in his veins. And his blood was on fire. **It was the passion of freedom that flamed within him.**

Well, there he pondered. "How can I set my people free?" And he entered a singular psychological experience. I must omit any attempt to interpret the account of that experience. I will state the facts. **Moses got into bad company**—for a man in his state of mind. He met God. God met him. I am not going to discuss God. I feel like Walt Whitman when in announcing the fact of his Illumination, he said, "I have despised riches . . . I have stood up for the stupid and crazy . . . I have hated tyrants . . . **Argued not concerning God** . . ."

Moses met God.

Theologians have tried to explain the character of God. They have failed. There is something terrifically abrupt in the blunt announcement of the Divine Presence to this lonely meditating shepherd. It is a revelation of the character of God. "Moses! Moses!" said God. "Here—I," answered Moses. And then!

## **2.—God Said Five Things.**

(1). This mean desert spot—this sheep walk—is holy ground, for I am about to send you **to emancipate a working-class from industrial injustice.**

(2). "I have surely seen the **affliction** of my people. The **cry** of the children of Israel is come unto me, and I have seen the **oppression** wherewith the Egyptians oppress them."

(3). "I have heard their cry **by reason of their task-masters.**" Observe that God was clear in his economics. I speak reverently. God did not seek for individualistic accusations of vice, and drink, and idleness, and thriftlessness—against these people. The Word of God, which you people profess to prize, says "by reason of their taskmasters." We Socialists agree.

(4). "I am come down **to deliver them** out of the hand of the Egyptians, unto **a land** flowing with milk and honey."

(5). "Come, now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that **thou may'st bring forth my people out of Egypt.**"

I said Moses got into bad company. I repeat it. He was bad enough. He had killed a taskmaster—had fled—and was here plotting the liberation of his people. **He was a silent conspirator against Pharaoh's tyranny.** And the God that spoke was of the very same mind as Moses. "I have heard their cry—it is their taskmasters—these slaves must be delivered—Go!—I will be with you!"

Speaking again with utmost reverence this God is "materialistic"—if the criticisms of the Socialist movement from noted city pulpits are to be hearkened to. I say, that as this announcement of God stands it is grossly materialistic—**Not one word about their souls!** Not one syllable about selecting the good ones and leaving the wicked people in the hells of Egypt! Not one hint of the doctrine of immortality! Not one hint about dogma, doctrine, belief, church, ism, Bible! How much God might have learned if he had only waited for the modern sermons of the soothsayers of Capitalism! But no. God says, "I have seen the oppression of the people: I have heard them cry under the curse of these taskmasters; I am going to deliver them to a free land"—land, mind you—and freedom from social wrongs. "And now, Moses, thou art the Servant of the Lord if thou wilt **go and bring the people out.**"

### **3.—Slaves : Oppression : Milk : Honey.**

Really now. Why does not God use religious formulæ, and ecclesiastical phraseology, and theological terminology. In short, **Why is God not orthodox?** Consider the vocabulary of God. I copy from the Bible lying before me: "People, affliction, Egypt, cry, taskmasters, sorrows, deliver, land, good land, large land, oppression, bring them forth, out of Egypt,

milk, honey ! ” These are the terms of a science of economics. If you want to find them discussed, read Karl Marx and Socialist literature, not systems of theology ! Did you ever think of that ? **Imagine God talking about such common things as slaves, oppression, land, milk, and honey !**

If such a God as that should speak such words as that and call to the professing God-fearing bishops, and clergy, and preachers, and church-members—He would utterly upset their peace of mind, and precipitate them into the Socialist camp !

The Socialists are supposed to have no God, and to dishonour God, to be atheists in short—because “ They see the affliction of the people, by reason of taskmasters,” and are determined to bring them out of bondage into Industrial Freedom—from the Egypt of Capitalism to the Canaan of the Co-operative Commonwealth !

While the Christians have a God and glorify him by refusing to see the affliction of the people, and defending the wrongs of the taskmasters, and voting at every election to keep the people in the bondage of the Egypt of Capitalism !

If any preacher or church-member reads or hears these lines, may I be forgiven for jarring your complacency, by announcing to you that your allegiance to Capitalism is your disobedience to the spirit of the God of Moses, and a denial of His will concerning the freedom of men. No wonder the common people of the wide-world are repudiating a religion that repudiates itself !

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#### IV

### MOSES : THE LABOUR LEADER.

It may seem to some that I have over-proved my case. I have made Moses out to be more of a materialist (if interest in labour conditions of the workers is



materialism) than the most radical modern Socialist. And, to make matters worse, by merely repeating the words of the Angel of the Lord, which summoned Moses to deliver the people, I have reverently shown that the same interest in plainest terms is the concern of God.

### **1.—The Limitless Value of Human Personality.**

I do not say for one instant that there are no concerns but material concerns. I do not say for one instant that there are not heights and depths of mental and spiritual illumination, and of moral and social perfection and loveliness for every human being. I have no desire to hint that Moses thought nothing about the higher development when I say that when God spoke to Moses God never mentioned the souls of these slaves, nor anything of a religious character whatsoever, that, therefore, there is no meaning to life except the Capitalistic ideal of "eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

In describing the labour condition of these slaves, in a previous paragraph, we see that their whole treatment arose from **the private control of their basis of labour**, and was sustained by a **ruthless disregard for human life**. The very opposite of this was the spirit of Moses. The sacredness and possibilities of every one of these slaves was taken for granted by Moses, as much as gravitation is taken for granted by a bricklayer or a stonemason. When the Angel of the Lord says, "I have seen the oppression of these people, and I have heard their cry, and I have come to deliver them"—**the ultimate, absolute, value of these people each to himself is taken for granted.**

So it is with us of the Socialist movement. We will not take second place in our estimate of the sacredness and rights of every man in himself. The church defines man as "soul." Very well. Pack that word as full of meaning as human love and intelligence is able to pack

it. Perfect your definition with the aid of poetry and philosophy. And then we Socialists shall keep the issue still open. We Socialists say that a Capitalist Civilisation absorbed in greed and gold and profit, and the aristocracies of these mammon-gods—**Capitalist civilisation is not able to define the soul of man.** “By their fruits ye shall know them.” The value that Capitalism and Capitalistic religion places upon human souls is not measured by your religious talk, but by your ruthless use of land and machinery for private profit, and your Capitalistic exploitation of human lives, a system that coins their blood into profit. **The labour market registers your measure of care for souls.**

We Socialists take it for granted that the children of the working-man, who were fed on stolen pigs'-food in Newcastle, are infinitely more valuable than can be expressed by any religion which supports a civilisation that produces such misery and degradation in the midst of limitless abundance.

**We do not complain against your spiritual conception of life.** We protest against your crass, coarse, crude, mammonistic conception of life, which permits human beings to be treated as commodities—as things—as wood, hay, stubble—as grist for the Capitalist mill.

God's determination to bring these people out of Industrial Oppression was his way of showing that the “Heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind.” Your determination to keep the working-class in the grip of Capitalism **is your atheism and infidelity to that God.**

Moses' conviction that he could not live in peace with the Universe unless he moved heaven and earth to deliver these people out of intolerable conditions of Social Injustice, was the revelation of his love to his fellows, and the measure of his **devotion to all of their interests up to the highest.**

God's materialism (we rather like the word) is a revelation of the Spirituality of the Divine Nature. The materialism of Moses is the open vision of his soul,

that takes it for granted that a whipped slave is infinitely more valuable than all the obelisks, palaces, and pyramids that a proud, haughty, and ruthless tyranny could erect. We would to God that the modern men who profess to speak for God could get baptised with the materialism of Moses. **Such materialism makes men.** I have said before, Moses was a man, with red blood in his veins. He was not a semi-male, semi-female entity, speaking rose-water spiritual recipes, delicious to the hearkening ears of a ruthless ruling class. He was a Man.

## 2.—The First General Strike.

The direct, matter-of-fact way that Moses goes about this task is like a revelation. Modern Realism might take lessons from the Book of Exodus.

1. The Lord said to Moses, "Go unto Pharaoh, and say, **Let my People go.**"

2. And the Lord said to Aaron, "Go into the wilderness and meet Moses."

3. And Aaron went, and met him and kissed him.

4. And Moses told Aaron that he was on his way to deliver his people from Pharaohism and take them out of Egypt.

5. And Moses and Aaron gathered all the elders of the people together and told them of the plan.

6. And the people believed—and it is said that when they heard that the Lord had **looked upon their affliction**, "then they bowed their heads and worshipped."

In short, the program of Moses is (1) to Pharaoh—"Let my people go"; (2) to the People—"Get out of Egypt." The modern parallel is "Capitalism must be abolished,"—"On to the Co-operative Commonwealth."

Moses then passes the word around and the whole Working-Class is **organised** into tens, and hundreds, and thousands. **He was the first great trade unionist.**

Fortunately for his enterprise they knew they had only one trade—slavery—it was all one whether they hunted stubble, or dug the mud, or wheeled the mud, or laid stone. **They were slaves.** Moses was too wise a man to think that he could save one class of these labourers without saving all. He did not wish to emancipate one aristocratic group, and leave another “sweated” by the taskmaster. “Ye are all slaves; ye are all brethren; organise as one man, and march to Freedom.” Moses was the first great advocate of the Class-Struggle. He was not a theorist, however, in political economy. He was a militant strategist—a doer.

It would be interesting to read the minutes of the meetings in which Moses and Aaron, and the elders organised this First General Strike, now mooted again throughout the world, as a possible weapon of militant International Socialism. **Pharaoh is not much good when he has to dig his own mud, and bake his own bread, and make his own bed. No.**

According to the minutes of their meetings as preserved in the chapters of Exodus, we do know that the first hints of revolt were met by severe conditions at the hands of the taskmasters; and we learn that the slaves set upon Moses, saying that they were worse off than before he came—a thing often repeated in modern history. And Moses, it is said, laid it back on the Lord in very direct language, “Since I came to Pharaoh to speak in thy name, he hath done evil to this people; neither hast thou delivered thy people at all.” Moses was going to keep the Lord to his materialistic program. But the resources of Eternal Justice were not exhausted, and if you read the minutes in Exodus vi., and on to Exodus xii., you will read the history of a Class-Struggle that may clear up your economics.

### **3.—The Lord’s Singular Advice.**

At one of the meetings Moses reported that he had a revelation from God that the night before the General



Strike was called, every man and woman should borrow jewels of gold and jewels of silver and raiment from the Egyptians. **"When ye go,"** said the Lord, **"ye shall not go empty."** "Ye shall spoil the Egyptians, and put the jewels and the raiment on your **own** sons and your **own** daughters." It is singular that God should dare to thus interfere with the **sacred private property** of the Egyptians, in the interest of these thriftless slaves!

Why had they not "saved" for a rainy day? We are not informed, except, that every day appears to have been a rainy day for them. And then, of course, **the ruling classes had saved it**—I had almost forgotten—and **two classes cannot retain the same product of labour at the same time.** That is so. That is worth knowing.

#### 4.—A Dramatic Passover.

What a simple, direct word, that word "passover" is. In the minds of most of the people, it is a mystical religious Jewish festival. But come to earth. That word and that feast belong to us. It sums up in the most perfect simplicity the circumstances, the fact, the memory, of that night of triumph, when millions of organised slaves were led by Moses to **PASS** out of the slavery of their taskmasters **OVER** into a new social order. It is first an act, then a fact, then a memory, then a religious feast. And finally it becomes so traditional that its raw, real, matter-of-fact significance is lost. And then it is expounded, explained, and preached about, and actually exploited to prevent the oppressed of modern times to **PASS** out of the Egypt of Capitalism, **OVER** into the Promised Land of Social Justice and Industrial Freedom.

Turn to your Exodus again and read the detail. **Moses was an optimist.** That is to say, a man of faith—all-conquering faith. He laughed at impossibilities. I learn this from the fact that he renounced the

Egyptian calendar, and began the counting of the years while his people were still bleeding in the back from the whips of the taskmasters. He said, "We go out this year." Moses was not afraid of delivering the people too rapidly. That is a disease of the moderns. "This shall be the first month of the first year," said Moses. "We don't count existence by the slavery years. We begin to count the years with this year. And this year we vote as one man to get out. And we are going.—That is all. Get ready."

There is nothing more dramatic in all human history. **He celebrates the Passover before they pass over.** I said Moses was a Man. Moses was not a liberal nor a progressive. **He was a revolutionist.** No more Egypt for him. Egypt had been tried, and, like modern Capitalism, had failed. It enriched the Pharaohs out of the labour of the impoverished workers. And the Lord said, "I will smite the Egyptians." "It is a night to be much observed unto the Lord **for bringing them out of the land of Egypt.**" Six hundred thousand men—(100,000 more than the present unemployed in the kingdom)—marched in ranks of five, besides women and children, and a mixed multitude, with flocks and herds, for Canaan. And the "pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night," reduced to doubtful mystic significance by modern religious teachers, stood before this moving camp of toil-driven people. I shall not dare explain away the miraculous elements. **Things greater than miracles would happen to the Working-Class if they would rise as one man to inaugurate the Brotherhood of Man, in Socialised Industry.** Let future generations bear me record.

Pharaoh's horsemen and chariots and army pursue. You remember that Pharaoh wanted them to vote "liberal," and stay in Egypt; that is, they might go off a step or so from the abject slavery, but not out of it. But when he found they meant business, that his supply of cheap labour was about to be exhausted, he

showed fight. At this point the slaves showed signs of surrender, and complained bitterly against Moses. "Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying; Let us alone that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness."

### **5.—A Great Social Salvation.**

And then Moses uttered that famous text of triumph which has been such a source of pulpiteering ever since. "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the Salvation of the Lord, for the Egyptians, whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever." (The text usually ends with the second comma). **Note the kind of Salvation of the Lord Moses talked of.** I think this is the first time the phrase "Salvation of the Lord" is mentioned in the Bible.

Let me state it again. **The Salvation of the Lord, here referred to by Moses, is the deliverance of the people out of the power of their Industrial Masters, who controlled the land and the instruments of labour, and hence also controlled life itself, and all its possible development.** This lesson must be rubbed into the conscience of the religious people of our day.

"The Lord shall fight for you," said Moses. When Moses showed a disposition to parley with God, the Lord said, "Wherefore criest thou unto me.—Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward!" And he did so. And just then the cloud—whatever it was—lifted from before them, and stood between the army of tramps and the regulars of Pharaoh. And the rest of the story follows. The slaves marched to freedom. Panic seized the Egyptian host. The sea engulfed them. "There remained not so much as one of them"—says the record. "And Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. **And they saw that great work which the Lord did upon their oppressors;** and the people feared the Lord, and

believed the Lord, and his servant Moses." I think a Lord like that is worth while—to oppressed slaves, and over-worked exploited masses! (But rather an unfortunate deity for the exploiters and oppressors!)

For the Lord said, "Against all the gods of Egypt, **I will execute justice.**" It is still to be heard, the voice of the Lord:—"Against all the gods of Capitalism I will execute justice."

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## V.

### MOSES : THE LABOUR LEGISLATOR AND STATESMAN.

Thus had Moses organised the workers and marched them out of Egypt into Freedom. Pharaoh's hosts were in the bottom of the sea. The first May-day of victory was celebrated with song and dance.

Moses had proved himself a successful Labour Leader. He had led the first Great Strike and had won out. But that was only the beginning of his great work. He must now become a Labour Legislator, a Labour Statesman.

Moses was not an M.P., nor a cabinet minister, nor a priest, nor a pastor. He was indeed a Shepherd of his people. **And unlike modern Shepherds he found pasture for his sheep.** That I regard as the first business of pastors and shepherds. The briefest outline of the first Acts of Moses give us the principles of the Social Revolution needed for our times.

#### 1.—Water.

The dance is over, and the very next verse in the record says, "they found no water," or what they did find was bitter. And it is said "Moses cried unto the Lord." I want to show you how the gross materialism of this man Moses does not shed itself. Why did he not give them sermonettes on the Spiritual Fountains



of which he himself evidently drank? That would have been so easy! No. They needed water; water to drink they must have. They faced physical necessity. **Water is a greater immediate need than food.** Moses led them to water first.

## 2.—Bread.

In 45 days after leaving Egypt, as they entered the second wilderness, supplies gave out. The commissary department failed. Evidently they must have "borrowed" considerable in Egypt. And they began to murmur against Moses. They were not like our modern "unemployed," who turn around and vote for policies and parties that produce unemployment. They held the Prime Minister responsible for he had his hand on the helm. They said, "**Are you going to kill this whole assembly with Hunger?**" A very materialistic proposition. And this forces Moses' next imperative Act. And he cried unto the Lord. And the Lord is materialistic also. The Lord said, "I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: I will rain bread from heaven. **At even you shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the Lord.**" And it was so. Think of the Lord of Heaven and earth descending to such a commonplace materialistic matter as flesh and bread to eat!

## 3.—A Health Department.

Along with the provision for these two immediate necessities of the people, Moses established a Department of Public Health. He showed the people that none of the terrible diseases that they were swept off with in Egypt should fall upon them. I cannot go into the detail of his hygienic arrangements; but many a modern army has not preserved itself from disease as did this horde of slaves.

The Socialist spirit and Message—which is the Moses to-day—shows how the ravaging diseases that smite the working-classes are due to over-work, under-feeding, bad-housing, congested and unsanitary dwellings. Small-pox, diphtheria, fevers of all kinds, above all, the White Plague of consumption, that carries off the working-class by hundreds and tens of thousands—all these are diseases of the Egypt of Capitalism.

#### 4.—Three Great Planks in Moses' Platform.

(1) **The Socialist Movement demands that the land shall be socially owned by the whole people;** that land monopoly be made impossible; that every man shall be guaranteed equality of opportunity in the Use of Land. Land is the Social Base of Human necessity. It is water. It is Bread. It is life itself. Landlordism is an unspeakable social curse.

The land, according to Moses, was never to be private property. The land belonged to the Lord—not to the landlords—this is the Jewish form of Land Nationalization. That means Social Ownership for the Equality of Opportunity to all. In case exchanges of use should occur in process of time, in the year of Jubilee, every 50 years, the land all went back to the original tribes and families. Any developing in-Justice was nipped in the bud. Socialists do not ask for a reduplicate of Moses' land laws. But we do demand the twentieth century application of the principle involved. **There is no solution of the problem of the unemployed, and poverty will grow apace, until landlordism is abolished, and the land restored to the People.**

(2) **The Socialist Movement demands that the Capital needed for the equipment of Industry, at least for the fundamental needs of the people, shall be Socially Owned.** The first need of the people is the Right to Work. No man should have to beg another man the chance to work. That is slavery—slavery of the worst form, in some respects.

The second form in which the power of Capitalism is exercised is by the laws of Interest. "If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor, then, thou shalt not be to him, as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury." Here not only the practice of usury is forbidden, but the exercise of the spirit or attitude, or manner of the money-lender, who holds you at his mercy, is forbidden. It is all nonsense to say that "usury" means unlawful rate of interest. Interest on money at all is strictly forbidden. The early Church fathers vehemently preached against it. Capitalism has succeeded in utterly silencing the modern pulpit on these questions.

The Socialist Movement demands Social Ownership of Capital, and thus the receipt of the total product by the people who earn it.

(3) **Under the law of Moses, the tools of the worker could not be seized for debt.** What good would this guarantee of land be if he had not tools to work it? I just mention this matter in passing. Social Ownership of Capital, just referred to, involves Social Ownership of Machinery—our present form of Tools. As Socialists we demand the guarantee to every man of the Right of Access to the Mechanical Equipment of Civilisation in order that he may labour and provide for his existence.

Surely, this Statesmanship of Moses, that meets the primal needs of the people, which prevents land monopoly, abolishes interest, and guarantees to the worker his tools, is full of inspiring instruction to the men of our day.

And when the Bible is used as an apology of Capitalism, it is a fearful perversion; and when the name of God is used as a defence of Capitalism, we may well ask, Is the Lord you refer to, the Lord who said unto Moses, "I have seen the affliction of the People, and I am come down to deliver them. Go now, and bring them forth."

## The Hebrew Prophets and the Social Revolution.

“**N**O man hath seen God at any time.” Certain impressions or feelings are interpreted as the “presence of God,” and certain states of mind and will as the “Will of God.” Men who believed they were thus moved upon by the Divine Presence, and inspired to utter the Divine Will, have given to mankind a particular literature, and this literature has been called the Word of God. So far as our Western civilisation is concerned, that Word of God is known as the Holy Bible, consisting of the Old and New Testament Scriptures.

The Old Testament was the Sacred Book of the Jews before the Christian era. This has been accepted by the Christian world as co-ordinate with the New Testament. Together they form the basis of scriptural appeal. No discrimination is made in favour of one as against the other in the public preaching and teaching of Christendom. Whatever discrepancies critical scholarship may find in the text, whatever differing degrees of inspiration may be attributed to the various writers, the Bible is still the sacred volume of the Christian Church and the acknowledged fount of spiritual wisdom and truth to the Western world.

**Now this Western civilisation is passing through a great Social Revolution—the greatest in all human history.** The spiritual base of this revolution is the urge of the soul of the downmost man for fulness and freedom of life. The least economic demand of the revolution is the abolition of power and privilege and monopoly in natural resources and industrial equipment, and such a degree of co-operative administration



of industry as shall guarantee to every man the complete physical base and social environment of a full and free life. Age-long despotisms are to perish in the fuller triumph of democracy in the industrial field. The goal of this world-wide revolution is the overthrow of world-wide Capitalism.

Up to this present writing **the Christian Church**, which holds and expounds the Bible—the Word of God—is **the moral and spiritual bulwark of Capitalism**. The conscience of Capitalism is peaceful and unaccused by the teachers of the oracles of God. The members of the Church, her young people, her children, have not yet heard from their ordained teachers that Capitalism, as a system of industry, is in any sense contrary to the Word or Will of God. The most powerful opponents and hinderers of a peaceful revolution are the avowed and accredited ministers of the Word. By silence and by open defence they constitute themselves as the spiritual police to guard the ill-gotten gains of Capitalism. The shepherds have not only abandoned the sheep to the industrial wolves, which fleece and devour the people, but these shepherds openly defend the wolf in his depredations by appeal to the Word of God, which they are ordained to preach. Or, if they ignore the revolution, in its purpose and programme, their contention is that the Will of God concerns individual souls, individual sins, and personal salvation. To deal specifically with the social conscience, concerning definite social sins organised in social institutions, to call the people to a great social repentance, to summon them from Social Injustice to a great Social Salvation—that is considered to be beyond the function of the preachers of the Word. When the preachers do discuss the wrong inherent in Capitalism, their programme is to mend, but not to end the injustice. They do not lay the axe to the root of the tree. They would put a new patch on the rotten garment of competitiveness. **They would put the new wine of freedom into the vile old bottles of wage-slavery.**

It is my purpose in this address to appeal to the Hebrew prophets as a justification of the general spirit and direction of the Social Revolution, and to show that if they spoke the Word and Will of God, that Word and Will belongs to us of the Socialist movement, and not to the Church which stands as the apologist and defender of Capitalism. The Church which refuses to face the social problem, or when dealing with that problem stands as the antagonist of Socialism and the apologist of Capitalism, denies both the spirit and the message of the prophets of Israel. They thus reject what they themselves declare to be the Word of God.

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## I.

### THE PROPHETS IN GENERAL.

To the average mind a prophet is one who predicts coming events. But this is a very subordinate element in the Hebrew prophets. They were primarily utterers, announcers, heralds of the Truth, to their own people, and to their own generation—prediction entering in only as the inevitable logic of contemporary events. Their God was not a God of abstract theology, but a God of history and Providence. They never discussed theological formulæ. They declared the Will of God in relation to the actual life and institutions of their nation and times. They lived in the very throes of passing events. They told the plain and unvarnished truth about facts and events. Had they lived in our day they would have quoted statistics with lightning effect. They would have uncovered the raw and bleeding sores of our industrial life. They were realists. Their inspiration was born out of the realities of life. Fact, before the very face of anyone who would simply look, was, to the prophet, the Voice of God. When these facts ate into his consciousness, and he dropped the plummet of truth and justice upon them, then the hand of the Lord was upon him. And

he became so identified with the Will of Jehovah as opposed to the wrong about him that his very personality seemed the Divine incarnate. The elemental sense of right and humanity in his own soul was the Voice of the Lord and his ground of appeal. He needed no other. This applied to the passing events constituted the Will of God. **And when the prophet spoke under this power, he declared the Word of God. He had no Scripture to appeal to. He made Scripture.**

This word he uttered with tremendous directness and vehemence. God said unto Amos "Strike!" Jeremiah declares this word was as a fire in his marrow. Scholars tell us that the utterance of the prophet Joel, in the original Hebrew, sounds like the rattle of musketry, or the roar of artillery, as if the prophet would literally fire upon them with the Word of God. And Hosea says, "I have hewed them by the prophets"—literally gashed them—"I have slain them by the word of my mouth." These men do not argue. They announce and declare. So penetrating and illuminating, like lightning; so fearless and direct. like weapons; so uncompromising, like truth, were the words of these mighty men, that millions of our race through long ages have acknowledged their inspiration, and said, "Surely this is the Word of the Lord." So high did these men stand as spokesmen for the Eternal that when the great prophet of Nazareth appeared seven hundred years later they could not acknowledge him in higher terms to the popular mind than to say, "He is one of the prophets."

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## II.

### THE PROPHET AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

I have said that the prophet faced fact, that he watched the march of events. Fact seemed to be the

wax in which his word was a seal. He dropped the plummet of justice and righteousness upon these facts and events. He does not deal in abstractions. He is no dreamer, but an actor in the midst of affairs.

Now, before we can see the social significance of the message of the prophets, and the relation of that word to the present Social Revolution, **we must take note of the social conditions at the time in which they speak.**

### **1.—The Age of Commercialism.**

Israel was then (800-700 B.C.) passing out of the simple agricultural stage into a commercial career among the nations. The story of the social conditions in which these prophets appear reads like pages from the history of our own times, in which an age of machinery, with all the attendant wrongs of commercialism, has drawn the people from the land and herded them in great cities, there to be exploited as helpless victims caught in the maelstrom of world-forces.

Historians of the time of Amos and Micah and Isaiah tell us that the newly developed trade fell into the hands of plutocrats. Wealth concentrated in the hands of the few. Huge private estates were formed out of the once common lands. The poor landowners were bought out or fell into the power of their rich creditors, and were ejected by violence and false judgment. The peasant proprietors were destroyed. The yeomanry perished. The cities grew apace, filled with the exiles from the land. Here they met the upper millstone of usury and oppression.

Inevitably there developed a luxurious and corrupt upper class. **The aristocracy racked their brains for new ways of consuming the surplus wealth that they had wrung from the poor.** They built magnificent palaces, furnished in ivory and beautified with art. They had summer houses and winter houses, town



houses and country houses, while the poor had not where to lay their heads. This wealthy class enriched the temples of religion with their generous gifts, and lavishly endowed the religious teachers. "The rich nobles were steeped in sensual luxury, the court was full of gallantry; and feminine extravagance and vanity gave tone to aristocratic society, which, like the noblesse of France, on the eve of the Revolution, was absorbed in gaiety and pleasure, while the masses were ground down by oppression and the cry of their distress filled the land."—(Robertson Smith, in "The Prophets of Israel.") "All social bonds were loosed in the universal reign of injustice." "Every man for himself, and no man for his brother." But so great was the wealth and splendour of the rich that it dazzled the eye of all officialdom. Priest and preacher interpreted the growing wealth as a sign of prosperity and as a mark of Jehovah's presence among His people. The shepherds forgot the poor out of whose labours this wealth was extracted. **The priests spent their days in a delightful optimism.** "The glare of wealth, the fulsome love of country, the rank incense of a religion that was without morality—these thickened all the air, and neither the people nor their rulers had any vision."—(Prof. George Adam Smith, in "The Twelve Prophets").

## **2.—The Rich and the Poor.**

The gulf between the rich and the poor became wider and wider. The rich were lifted away from the struggles of the poor, and used these improverished and exploited people as pawns for their game. Micah says that the wealthy "stripped the skin off the poor, and their flesh off their bodies." Zechariah declares that the rich and powerful dealt with the people actually as "buyers and sellers of sheep." The mighty are veritable sheep merchants. Amos declares that the social injustice is so great as to "cause the sun to go

down at noon, and to darken the earth in the clear day." Isaiah pronounces judgment for the ruling classes: "For ye have eaten up the vineyard: the spoil of the poor is in your houses! What mean ye that ye beat my people in pieces, and grind the faces of the poor?"

Such, then, were the social conditions in Judah and Israel when the prophets burst upon them with the oracles of Jehovah. Throw into the picture our age of machinery—the smoke of factory towns, the dull monotony of the homes of the working-class, the armies of the unemployed, the grim workhouse, child labour, sweating, the game of the Stock Exchange, and a few leaping 60-h.p. motor-cars—and the picture is modern enough. The rich pile up their gains, the poor struggle on, God only knows how; the religious ceremony and enthusiasm proceed unabated. We need only an Amos, dashing like a lion out of the desert into the midst of a high religious ceremony, or into a revival meeting, to interrupt the scene in the name of the poor; or a Micah, wailing the bitter cry of the oppressed; or an Isaiah at court rebuking the proud aristocracy, to give us a return of the prophetic period.

### **3.—Hence the Message of the Prophets.**

The new social conditions precipitated the message of the prophets. **Out of the new economic situation there sprang new ethical values.** And out of this new economic and ethical vision there bloomed a new conception of the spiritual meaning of life. And so it is to-day. The new vital word of the Lord, ethical and spiritual, to this generation is being born out of our economic and social conditions. The Social Revolution holds and utters the prophetic word. **What the Hebrew Prophets were to the social conditions of their time, the Social Revolution is and is to be to our time.** From the spirit and message and labours of the prophets we may gather insight and inspiration.

## III.

**THE PROPHETIC MESSAGE PRIMARILY SOCIAL AND POLITICAL.**

Now what was the burden of the message of these men of God? Was it the message of the evangelist and revivalist? Was it individualistic, dealing only with the personal, spiritual life and private morality, ignoring the social needs of the people, and the social sin in unjust social institutions? Nay, verily! It was the very opposite of that. **These prophets of the Lord did not strain at gnats of individual sin, and swallow camels of social injustice and industrial oppression.** They dealt primarily with the public morality of the whole people, as expressed in the institutions and functions of the national life. Their concern was not primarily with the so-called religious life, but with the common, practical, work-a-day life of the people.

**1.—The God of Israel.**

In modern religion the thought is "God and the soul"; with Israel the basic idea is "God and the people" in their collective capacity. Let us remember that the character of Jehovah was first made manifest as the chief actor in a mighty Social Deliverance. The first word of God to Moses was this: "I have seen the affliction of my people, by reason of their taskmasters, and I am come down to deliver them." God reveals himself as hearing the cry of a working-class suffering from unjust social institutions, and determined upon their economic emancipation. The very name of God meant nearly nothing until He had delivered the people from Egyptian bondage. The name Israel means "God fighteth." Jehovah meant to these people first: Freedom—from industrial slavery; and, second: Justice and Equity in their new social state. **The God of Moses and the Prophets was the God of Freedom, Justice, and Social Righteousness; the friend of the**

**oppressed and the terror of the oppressors.** While the God of modern Capitalistic religion calls upon the people to worship Him in their slavery, the God of Israel called the people to worship on the ground that He had brought them up "out of the house of bondage." Such Scripture as they possessed at the time of the prophets was a record of the great national deliverances through which Jehovah had led them. The words "salvation" and "redemption," now used almost wholly in respect to states of the individual soul, in the early Old Testament writings, refer almost exclusively to social and national deliverances.

## **2.—The Social Message.**

With such a history and such a revelation of the character of God, no prophet could possibly go forth in Israel like a modern minister or evangelist, to deal with merely personal sins, ignoring fundamental social unrighteousness, or to offer a personal salvation to the few who might accept it, and ignoring the social deliverance the whole people needed.

Nearly all the texts quoted from the prophets by modern preachers are lifted right out of the context and utterly deprived of their social significance, and then forced to do service in a religious individualism, for which they were never intended. When, for example, Isaiah cries out to his people, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool," he is dealing with social sins. **He has just scorned their religious prayers, sacrifices, and ceremonies, and pleads for plain, simple justice** as alone pleasing to God. "Your hands are full of blood," he cries. "When ye make prayers, I will not hear." Therefore, **"Seek justice, and relieve the oppressed, and though your sins be red like crimson they shall be white as snow."** And Isaiah is typical of all. To find anything like the individualism of modern religious teaching in the Jewish prophets, you must go to the utterances of the



pessimists in the days of the captivity, when the social unity of the race was broken into fragments and the national hope almost extinguished.

### **3.—Industrialism and Social Salvation.**

The prophets of Israel, like the prophet of Nazareth, reveal in their personality and message that highest synthesis of the individual and the social body. They came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give themselves for the people. If it be claimed that surely the prophets themselves were individually "saved" men, our answer is that their salvation did not consist in the development of certain private virtues, or in the orthodox advocacy of a certain theology, new or old. Their salvation as individuals consisted in a total abandonment of every private or personal interest, that they might plead the cause of the people, and especially of the poor and oppressed, against the power of wrongdoers. Thus they incarnated the total human need and human life. Thus the prophet became indeed the Son of Man—as he styled himself—the Son of Humanity. His only interest was the common, universal, social interest of the whole people. The individual is "saved" when the soul is filled with a vast social ideal and thrilled with a social purpose. "To lose your own sorrow in the vaster sense of national trouble, as Hosea did, that is the first consciousness of a duty and a mission."—(Prof. George Adam Smith).

The excess of individualism in religion, which dates largely from the Reformation, has been greatly accentuated by the rank, competitive struggle in the daily life of the people. But if the God of the prophets is the Divine Reality of this universe, this acute individualism and pietism is a poor loaf of the redemptive purpose in mankind; for it neither saves the individual to that saviourship of humanity which is his

call and his privilege, nor does it save the whole people from the ravages of the social and industrial dragons that devour them.

#### 4.—They were Social Reformers.

These Hebrew prophets were social reformers of the most radical type, as the most casual reading of their lives and words will reveal. They were the voices of Social Revolution in their day, according to its need. Moses conspired against the tyranny of Pharaoh, **and organised the workers into a vast labour union, and marched them to freedom.** Samuel organised a new order of prophets for the express purpose of creating a national revival. Elijah attacked the king because of injustice in **land inclosure.** To Elijah God was the refuge of the oppressed and the support of the weak against the mighty. The influence of Elisha was directly political. He was the very soul of the struggle for independence during the Syrian wars. When he died they called him "the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof." The prophecies of Amos, Hosea, and Micah are almost wholly social and political, **calling for economic and social righteousness.** Joel calls upon the ministers of God to weep and wail over the misery of the people in their **economic distress.** "All trees of the field are dried up; yea, joy is abashed and away from the children of men." He calls upon the priests to put on mourning and beat their breasts, because "the food is cut off—the garners are desolate—the corn is withered—the herds huddle together." Let the priests cry, "Spare, O Jehovah, Thy people." Ezekiel pronounced woe upon the shepherds who feed themselves but neglect the flock, **and let the strong override the weak.** Jeremiah declares that he has been sent to pull down and to tear at unjust and unholy institutions, and to build anew in righteousness—a revolutionist, indeed, who barely escaped with his life. The first chapter of Isaiah is the bitterest attack in all sacred literature upon ceremonial religion that forgets

justice and social righteousness. Victor Hugo puts Isaiah in a list of the greatest geniuses in history, and says, "He is the great reproacher—he fixes a date for oppressors—he stands at the threshold of civilisation and refuses to enter." Even Jonah, the last of the prophets, calls upon the whole city of Nineveh to repent; and the record states that the national repentance began with the people, included the very beasts of the field, swells like a tide to the authorities, until the king himself casts off his emblems and shares in the communal fast. Here, again, God reveals his interest in whole mass populations of the weak and ignorant. "Shall I not care for Nineveh, that great city in which there are more than twelve times ten thousand human beings, who know not their right hand from their left—besides much cattle."

When the trade unionists at Hull declared their sympathy with the Socialist programme, or when the Wesleyans wheeled a petition weighing half-a-ton into the House of Commons, we have exhibitions of mass movements for social righteousness. But if you wish to see this passion for social justice, of which the Hebrew prophets are our great exemplars, sweeping over people irrespective of their creed, colour, or nationality, inspiring men and women with the spirit of devotion to a great social ideal, leaping forward to capture political power in order to establish economic freedom and justice in social institutions—if you wish to see this as never before exhibited in power and sanity of programme, you must behold the Socialist movement of the world.

We have now seen that the message of the prophets arose out of the social and economic conditions of the people. We have also seen that their message was not delivered to individual souls in terms of personal pietism, but to the whole people in terms of social righteousness. So the Social Revolution of our time, with its new social conscience, and its economic programme, arises out of the social conditions precipitated

by the age of machinery and private capitalism ; and the propaganda of the Social Revolution is directed not to individuals concerning their personal virtues and vices, but to every man in the nation, as a social unit, concerning social sin and economic injustice, and national unrighteousness, from which no man can individually escape, but from which escape can be social only.

### 5.—The Class-Struggle.

We carry the parallel one step further. While not neglecting other elements of social morality, the prophets of Israel emphatically ranged themselves on the side of the poor, and against their oppressors. They found themselves in the midst of a Class Struggle, and in the name of the God of Freedom and Justice they took the part of the toiling and oppressed common people. No fact stands out more plainly than this throughout the whole prophetic period. Indeed, this is so manifest that long before we come to consider the matter specifically it becomes manifest in the general study of the word of the prophets. They were the champions of the poor. **They ruthlessly impeached the rich, powerful, oppressors and grandees in Church and State.** To these men of God Jehovah had delivered these Hebrew slaves out of the hand of one master, and He was not going to see them put under another. He had brought them out of Egypt to make them free and to establish them in a land flowing with milk and honey, and any social development that turned that freedom back, or took away that milk and honey, Jehovah would destroy. **In this respect, then, the Social Revolution runs in close parallel with Hebrew prophecy.**

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### IV.

### THREE SUBSTITUTES FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE.

Let us now see the attitude of the prophets concerning this specific evil of industrial oppression and their



demand for social justice. **To the prophets social righteousness could not be realised except through righting the relations of men in their daily bread-getting.** Thus we see that the word of the Lord has to find application in the regular, abiding, organised, economic relations. God would accept nothing else, and nothing less. **Justice in bread-getting and land-using was the first necessary constituent of anything that proposed to be the will of God. For this kind of plain, matter-of-fact, work-a-day righteousness there could be no substitute.**

But right here the prophets had to face what prophets of social righteousness have always had to meet, viz., **grand, imposing substitutes and counterfeits for real righteousness.**

The religious consciousness is fundamental in man. If that consciousness does not find normal expression in human brotherhood and right social and economic relations, then it will become prostituted in abnormal forms of expression. These forms are at least three :—First, correct theology, with an accompanying pharisaism in morals ; second, ritualism and ceremony ; and, third, religious emotionalism. These three the prophets of Israel had to meet.

Social righteousness, expressed in social justice, in the freedom and security of the life of the people—that is the first and basic form of real religion and true morality. If any man does not want social justice in the use of land and machinery for the bread-getting realities of the common life, he does not want anything for humanity. Any religion that dodges this and practices substitutes is vain. These three substitutes for real social righteousness have to be punctured in order to fully reveal the will of God as simply love and freedom, and love and freedom only, in actual expression.

### **1.—The Prophets and Orthodoxy.**

Even a brief treatment of those three substitutes

is beyond our present scope. Jesus said, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say." For, "By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples that ye love one another as I have loved you." No theology, new or old, however orthodox or progressive, can be substituted for just and brotherly relations in the fundamental and commonplace realities. The way of the Greek was that of correct thinking and right dogma; the way of the Christ-spirit in all ages, including that of the Hebrew prophets, is the Good-will, the intellect to be made the servant of that will. The prophets, anticipating Christ, literally made sport of the religious teachers of their day, **for substituting accepted doctrines for righteousness.**

## **2.—The Prophets and Ritual.**

But the supreme attack of the prophets was upon the religion of ritualism and ceremonialism. As long as the people thought that God could be pleased with prayers, and songs, and ceremonies, and the repetition of formulæ, on stated high and holy days, and sacred services conducted by robed and dignified religious officials—**as long as the religious consciousness spent itself in this way, the prophets could make no headway in getting the people really right with God,** nor could they free the people from the injustice that was rampant and unquestioned in the midst of all this palaver.

Amos, the first and one of the very greatest of the prophets, makes ceremonial religion the "chief target of his shafts." He saw the people, under the guidance of their religious leaders, pouring the energy of the religious consciousness into these pagan forms and ceremonies, and he saw that this actually stifled the real moral and spiritual life. Their altars and ritual and forms and ceremonies actually hid the living God. To go to the temple or church, to duly offer the sacrifice, to chant the sacred songs, to repeat the prayers—**all of this became a mere routine which, offered as a sub-**

stitute for real righteousness in the common life, dulled the social conscience, and made social insight impossible.

### 3.—The Ridicule of Amos.

To Amos judgment must therefore begin at the House of God. Not that Amos wished to attack this ceremonial and ritualism as a thing in itself. He attacked it because the people made it take the place of Social Justice, and gave moral sanction to the existing social conditions. We of the Social Revolution think we go far when we declare that modern religion is bulwarking the injustice of Capitalism. Amos went further. **He looked upon these religious places as the very fountain of the social corruption,** for the greater priests were admitted to councils of State, and became associated in feelings and interests with the corrupt and tyrannical aristocracy, "and were as notorious as the lords temporal for neglect of law and justice." **Amos utterly repudiated the entire cult and all its doings. He scorned it. He ridiculed it. He caricatured it.** In one place, after an outburst upon it, in which he calls the very worship blasphemy and transgression, he actually goes on to say, in the original Hebrew, "The house of God shall go to the devil!" For they had made it no longer the house of God.

God speaks through Amos with the utmost abhorrence of the whole ceremonial activity, and in the same breath calls for the real righteousness of justice in the national life. "I hate, I loathe your festivals," said the Lord. "Your thank-offering of fatted calves, I will not look at them." To their religious music, the finest the art of the day could produce, God will stop his ear. "Let cease from me the noise of thy song! To the playing of thy viols I will not listen." **"But let justice roll on like water, and righteousness like an unfailing stream."**

### 4.—The Denunciation of Isaiah.

Isaiah adds his terrible denunciation of this ritualistic

substitute for social justice. Sabbaths and holy days, prayers and songs, tithes and offerings—all these offered to the God of this great universe as if he were a pagan deity—God utterly despises. No commentary can add vigour to the vehement scorn of the old prophet to the whole of it. “To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord. I am full of the burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts. . . . Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me . . . your prayer meeting, even, is iniquity . . . Yea, when ye make many prayers I will not hear; **your hands are full of blood . . . seek justice . . . relieve the oppressed . . .** though your sins be red like crimson they shall be as wool.”

### 5.—Hosea and Malachi.

When Hosea, like John in the Apocalypse, beholds the new earth wherein justice and righteousness shall be established, he sees no temple therein, **but the life and health and freedom of the people.** Malachi declared that the priests were for light to the masses, as shepherds unto the sheep. “The revelation of truth” was to be on the lips of the priest. But they had failed. They had neglected the sheep. They stood by and let the pastures be taken away from the sheep. The light that was in them had become darkness. “And I, Jehovah, on my part have made you contemptible to all people, and abased, in proportion as ye kept not My ways and had respect to persons in teaching the law.”

**Thus we see the bitterness of the attack on formal religion made by the prophets was made because the priests and people poured the moral and religious energy into religiousness instead of into righteousness.** Such a state of affairs had to be interrupted. It is a significant fact that the attack upon modern religion which arises in the Social Revolution throughout the world at the present time is made on similar



grounds. The Socialists have no reason to meddle with any form of religion that people may choose to indulge in. But when that religion exalts itself as the will of God over the souls of the people, and turns the moral energies of the people away from the simple righteousness of brotherhood and social justice, and **actually sustains and sanctifies injustice**, then it is open to attack as a menace to the freedom of the people on the ground of being a moral sanction to the injustice of Capitalism.

### **6.—The Prophets and Religious Emotionalism.**

The third substitute for genuine, everyday righteousness is religious emotionalism. This found expression in ancient Israel in the teachings of what the prophets call the "false prophets." These were not priests administering ritual, but teachers of theology and morality. Their religious activity had degenerated into a mere profession or trade. Amos felt compelled to declare he did not belong to that profession. They were of two classes—the one a sort of emotional evangelists and the other a more sedate preaching class. Professor George Adam Smith thus describes them:—"They went about in bands. They were filled with an infectious enthusiasm, by which they excited each other and all sensitive persons whom they touched. They stirred up this enthusiasm by singing, playing upon instruments, and dancing; its results were frenzy, the tearing of clothes, and prostration. The same phenomena have appeared in every religion—in paganism often, and several times within Christianity. They may be watched to-day among the dervishes of Islam, who, by singing, by swaying of their bodies, and repeating the Divine name, and dwelling on the love and ineffable power of God, work themselves into an excitement which ends in prostration and often in insensibility." Even Saul got into one of these groups and "got under the power," stripped off his clothes, and lay prostrate a day and a night.

The more sedate and respectable of these false prophets were **simply preachers of a religion without vision, that was fully at peace with existing evils.** "They were not always conscious liars. They were the mouthpiece of the average popular opinion. They corresponded to those modern preachers who act as eulogists of existing conditions, not because they desire to deceive the people, but because they are really charmed with things as they are, and have never had a vision from God to shake their illusion."—(Rauschenbusch).

So long, then, as the people believed that it was pleasing to God to develop a personal, subjective ecstasy, by singing and praying and contemplation, and so long as they thought to please God by accepting and living the poor, empty morality taught by the false prophets, **just so long the real righteousness for which the prophets stood could make no headway.** Hence the fearful condemnation visited upon these false teachers in the prophetic literature. They were blind leaders of the blind. We find a similar castigation of such men in the teaching of Jesus—not that He condemned them for what they did, but that they made **their pharasaic morality a substitute for genuine social justice and righteousness.** They fasted, prayed, and tithed mint and anise and cummin, but forgot infinitely more important things—justice and mercy, and the faith in which these naturally and inevitably grow.

A passage from Professor George Adam Smith will reveal at once the secret of their false prophecy, and show how it affected the relation of the rich and the poor. "Micah's tyrants, too, had religion to support them. A number of hireling prophets, whom we have seen both Amos and Hosea attack, gave their blessing to the social system which crushed the poor, for they shared its profits." (Mark the modern parallel which the Social Revolution discloses). "Those false prophets lived upon the alms of the rich, and flattered according as they were fed." At Ahab's table sat

four hundred of these fellows—"subserviency to the powerful made them liars." "To them Micah devotes the second oracle of chapter three. And we find confirmed by his words the principle we laid down before, that in that age the one great difference between the false and the true prophet was what it has been in every age since then till now—an ethical difference, and not a difference of dogma, or tradition, or ecclesiastical note. **The false prophet spoke, consciously or unconsciously, for himself and his living. He sided with the rich ; he shut his eyes to the social condition of the people ; he did not attack the sins of the day.** This made him false, robbed him of insight and the power of prediction. But the true prophet exposed the sins of the people. Ethical insight and courage, burning indignation of wrong, clear vision of the facts of the day—this was what Jehovah's spirit put into him, this was what Micah felt to be inspiration" . . . .

### **7.—The Prophet of the Poor.**

Micah has been called the "Prophet of the Poor." A simple, natural reading of his book will reveal the message of the prophet, and disclose in one short lesson all I have said, and show how the message of these great Hebrew reformers corresponds in spirit and direction with the present Social Revolution. **Micah pleads the cause of the people against the land-hungry and the powerful commercial classes.** The terrible indignation of the seer is aroused at the thought that his human brothers should be at the mercy of the greed of the economically strong. Then he turns upon the regular orthodox ministry of the day, who had flattered these rich and powerful into their sense of self-righteousness and justified their social injustice. His moral and spiritual message he relates closely and almost extremely with social conditions. I have no doubt that he daily saw the bitter lives of the poor all about him, and the luxury and pride of those who had gathered the surplus from the labour of the people. His heart broke. He

burst forth with the Word of God. To Micah is attributed the loftiest passage of moral and spiritual vision in the Old Testament, and this sublime passage is the climax of his message :—

“Wherewithal shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God ?

“Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old ?

“Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams or with ten thousands of rivers of oil ?

“Shall I give even my first-born for my transgression—the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul ? ”

**And the implied answer is No ! a thousand times No ! Of what good is all this ceremonial, or sacrifice, or palaver, or bowings to God or man ?**

What then ?

**“He hath showed thee, O man, what is good ; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do Justice and to love mercy, and to walk humbly, unpretentiously, unostentatiously with thy God.”**

**And what doth the Lord of heaven and earth require of us but the same !**

#### IV.

#### FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS.

As I have re-written this matter on the prophets to reduce it to its narrow limits, I felt that I had, perhaps, over-stated the national, social, and economic significance of the work of these men. But when I re-read their lives and words from the Old Testament I am more than ever convinced that this phase of the influence of Hebrew Prophetism **has never been sufficiently offered to the spiritual consciousness of Christendom.**

I am ready to confess that these prophets were mystics, healers, miracle workers, illuminati. They were no doubt men of silence and solitude and medita-



tion, coming forth into action in civilisation. But when they came forth they did not come imposing ceremonies or rituals upon the people, nor speaking about affairs religious, as we understand that word. They burst into the raw, real life of the people, and disclosed its lies and ignorance in the light of Truth and Justice.

All the modern critics of the prophetic literature make this Social Radicalism stand out supreme. There are not two sides to the question. Whatever else these mighty men were, whatever other message can be gathered from their writings, **this social revolutionism in the name of Jehovah is pre-eminent.** If any prominent preacher in London or New York would fill his sermons or books with such vehement social teachings, so plain, straight, undiluted, and frequent, he would become a nuisance to our respectable church-going classes. No petty moralising or eloquent treatment of other themes sandwiched in would atone for such utterances social and economic.

### 1.—Renan's Conclusions.

In the prefatory word I have counselled my readers to pursue this subject further by the study of the books to which I have referred. In previous references I have not mentioned the critical work of Renan on the Prophets of Israel. And now I cannot do better than offer some conclusions from his work, all of which sustain the main points of argument which I have presented concerning these great Hebrew teachers. The testimony is complete that they were social teachers, emancipators of the people, scorning mere religionism, crying aloud for social righteousness, defying kings and priests, and voicing the cry of the voiceless.

Renan declares that the distinctive character of Israel as a people commences with the prophets. It is thru prophecy that Israel occupies a place in the

history of the world. This extraordinary development of prophetism is, as it were, the main trunk of the religious history of the world. The aim of Jehovah, in taking pains that Israel should be educated as a holy people, **was the triumph of Social Justice.** It is, above all, by the conception of Providence and of Social Justice in the earth that the Hebrew development differs from all peoples. The Hebrew prophet never appeals to rewards and punishments beyond the grave. He hungers for Justice, and for speedy Justice. An unjust world is in the eyes of God a monstrosity. The Day of the Lord is a day of **radical revolution** : the triumph of the weak, the confusion of the mighty. Zion shall be the capital of a regenerated world **in which Justice shall reign.** A history of the origin of Christianity, if begun at the time when the primitive Christian ideas were formed would have to start from Isaiah.

“The Hebrew Prophets,” writes Renan, “are true protestants, reformers, and puritans. Not without reason were their writings the habitual literary food of the great agitations of the sixteenth century. **Inability to divide politics and religion is peculiar to both.**” The priesthoods both at Jerusalem and Bethel were frequently the means of retarding and thwarting the essential mission of Israel. But these prophets were not connected with services or sacrifices. It was far from the temples, in valleys or caverns “that the most true, most just, and most democratic God of that period inspired the profound sentiments, swelling hearts, and violent indignation which have counted among the vital pulsations of the heart of humanity.” This influence of Israel, unequalled in human history, was not in the hands of wise kings or sensible politicians, “but in the heart of visionaries, utopists, and inspired democrats who **commanded revolutions and made and unmade dynasties.** These stern seers of Israel were unintentionally emancipators, for they contended against the worst of tyrannies,

the connivance of ignorant crowds with a degraded priesthood."

## 2.—Of Elijah, Amos, Isaiah.

Renan says that the biography of Elijah remains like the **powerful leaven of future revolutions**. Tracked by kings like a wild beast, he defies them with a supreme impertinence. Amos was a malcontent. The bulk of the writings, Assyrian, Egyptian, and Chinese, is untruthful, and in the presence of kings, adulatory. Not so Amos. The Book of Amos is the first example of irreconcilable Journalism ever written. The prophets were open-air Journalists reciting their own production, adding to it, and often interpreting it by some symbolical act. At a time when the idea of right scarcely existed, these extraordinary men assumed the position of **defenders of the weak and the oppressed**. Isaiah is the greatest of a race of giants, the classical genius of Judaism, the tribune of Justice, the inspired soul, the acting conscience of Israel. He was not one of the sacerdotal caste. Hosea writes with the fierce vigour of a man of the people. He even employs their slang, terse, abrupt, penetrating. According to Hosea, the priests have deserted the true worship of Jehovah, seeking only to enrich themselves with offerings. They live upon the guilt and sin of the people, which they artificially create. Bethel, that is the House of God, shall go to Beth-aven, that is the devil. Thorns and thistles shall come up on the altars and holy places. Sacrifices are useless and an offence. The Lord demands righteousness and Justice, and that speedily. Such is the great and majestic message of the Hebrew Prophets.

# THE BIBLE ARGUMENT FOR SOCIALISM.

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## INTRODUCTION.

There are three great realities of our time which constitute the points of thought in the argument which I wish to place before you—the Capitalist System of Industry, the Socialist Movement, and the Christian Church.

**The Capitalist System** is the present form or mode of relationship which we bear to one another in the struggle for a living, and to the land, the machinery, and the products of labor by which we secure a living. Capitalism is the most complex, colossal, and world-wide system of society that has ever existed in the history of mankind.

**The Socialist Movement** is a political and moral revolt of the working classes against the intolerable injustices of Capitalism, and for the establishment of the Co-operative Commonwealth in the place of this competitive, monopolistic system. Socialism is the most stupendous organized movement of the workers of the world for industrial emancipation, through political action that history records.

**The Church** is the official institution for the instruction of the people in religious life and moral conduct. Its sphere of influence as an institution is practically co-extensive with Capitalism. The trader and the missionary sail in the same ship. And the Socialist finds the church in possession of the field wherever he goes.

For over fifteen years I have been active in spreading the truths of Socialism throughout England, Canada, and the United States. I was led into the Socialist movement through one of the deepest spiritual experiences of my life. To me Socialism is an inevitable logic of the kingdom of righteousness on the



earth. For all these years I have grieved over the hostility and indifference of the christian pastors and people to this great cause of humanity. The greatest moral hindrance to the Socialist movement is the negative quality of social conscience among church people. The excessive individualism of their moral instruction leaves them indifferent to the social problem. **As a rule a church member has no acutely awakened conscience concerning the wrongs and injustices of Capitalism. He lacks social vision. He has never studied human sorrow or suffering or sin in the light of the economic conditions in which men live.** The average church member has no moral enthusiasm for that Social Justice and Economic Freedom for the people which Socialism proposes. I believe that this condition of the church is hostile to the spirit of Christ, and a menace to the Kingdom of God on the earth. It is for the purpose of turning the moral and spiritual energy of the Christians from their ignoble support of Capitalism, and to consecrated devotion to the Socialist movement that this pamphlet is written.

### 1—The Preachers and the Bible.

You, the preachers of the Will of God, are the active, aggressive agents in expounding the Bible to the mind and conscience of the people. You number hundreds of thousands. You occupy a place of undue importance and influence among men. You are collecting over five hundred dollars every minute from the people for the professed purpose of teaching their consciences and training them in the Will of God—the Bible being your text book.

You are the educators of the people as to what is right and what is wrong. Not only so, but your moral appeal to the conscience and the will is enforced by your religious teaching:—religious teaching that claims to determine the eternal destiny of

human souls. You claim to be called by God himself to teach the truth and duty to men: and then you claim that the eternal and unending condition of souls hangs upon their acceptance or rejection, their obedience or disobedience to your teaching. **This is the secret of your power over men**—your professed relation to their eternal destiny.

Now this is a terrible assumption, and if it were not so common it would appear to be a colossal and unguaranteed assumption quite beyond our contemplation—that any human being whatsoever should ever assume such power in relation to any other. But since this assumption is acceded to by millions of people you become, in a truly awful sense, the controllers and disposers and keepers of the conscience of your believing and adherent multitudes.

For twenty centuries and longer the simple multitudes, trusting to your assumed authority have in a serious measure, obeyed or feared you on pain of eternal torment. What you condemn is forbidden. What you condone is accepted. They are pleased to feel at ease in their consciences about any institution or **social condition concerning which you are silent**. For are you not the interpreters of God? Who shall gainsay your verdict? Whoever may take sacraments at your hands, he is at peace with God. And whatever cause or movement professing to be good does not receive your blessing and support—that cause or movement is a social or moral heresy worthy of neglect or scorn or even persecution by the faithful.

For a score of times in twenty centuries, you have defended or left unaccused that which the awakening conscience and quickened intelligence of the people has finally reprobated and utterly eschewed. For a score of times you have placed the condemnation of your assumed moral authority upon movements of the people that finally have proved to be the very sacredest efforts of the human race.

I have just read "Studies in Christianity," by Prof. Borden P. Bowne, of Boston, one of the profoundest thinkers in the Methodist Episcopal church. In this book, published in 1909, Prof. Bowne makes the following confession: "The authority of God and conscience has been invoked for numberless crudities, imbecilities, and iniquities, and has been made the mainstay of political and ecclesiastical oppression. . . the conventional social conscience has often been the bulwark of blind conservatism and oppression. . . . One acquainted with history can truthfully address the Church, considered as an ecclesiastical organization and say: Which of the prophets has not the Church persecuted? What new truth is there that the Church has not opposed? What mental or moral or social or political progress is there that the Church has not protested against; and what tyranny or oppression is there but the Church has not espoused and supported? . . . whether in government or in morals, or in social forms, and religious thinking, the most bitter and determined enemy of progress has been the ecclesiastical organization. **About this there can be no question** . . . . If the Church could have had its way, modern civilization would never have developed, and humanity would have been ruined. We should have been living in filth and squalor and superstition, and intellectual abjectness of every kind. . . . Only the instinctive and irresistible impulse of human nature, whereby it has vindicated its own rights has saved humanity from destruction by religion."

And now we are again at a great crisis in human history—a crisis coming to concrete form in the **economic, political, and moral issue between Capitalism and Socialism**. What shall be the attitude of the interpreters of the Will of God in this titanic struggle? By open defense of Capitalism or by silence concerning this unjust system, are you going to give your people a lead against the Socialist movement? Or are you going to voice the great social truths of



Scripture, and inspire the moral and spiritual powers of the people to a peaceful solution of this Supreme Issue of the Times? It is in this connection that I wish to present to you **The Bible Argument** for Socialism.

## **2.—Capitalism and Socialism Defined.**

Before proceeding with the argument in detail, let us briefly define Capitalism and Socialism.

Men must live. In order to live they must have the products of labor. These cannot be secured without the labor of the worker. He cannot work without access to land or machinery or both. **Land, machinery, labor, products, and the laborer himself**—these are the series involved in Bread-Getting.

Now under Capitalism, the land, the machinery, and the products of human labor are all open to the private ownership and private administration of private individuals or corporations **for their private profit**. Hence we have a universal commercial gamble for railroads, lands, coal, iron, steel, wool, cotton, &c. The inevitable outcome of this vast game is the development of trusts and combinations of the most astounding magnitude. The social results are seen in overwork, and unemployment, pauperism, crime, prostitution and poverty. We behold an intense struggle for bare existence on the part of millions of our people and a few millionaires with their almost incalculable wealth in control of the means of life of the many. The upshot of this gamble and monopoly of industry is a veritable trading in the very bodies and souls of human beings.

The program of Socialism is that of Social Ownership and democratic management of the basic industry of the cities, states and nation.

**What all the people socially need the people should socially own.**

What the individual needs the state should guarantee him the inalienable opportunity to earn.



What he earns the state should secure to him by preventing that exploitation of trusts and monopolies which everywhere prevails today.

The postoffice system, the public schools, the fire department, illustrate the Socialist principle. They belong to the people. They are not conducted by private capitalists or private corporations for private profit. **We conduct them for the use and profit of all.**

This same principle should apply at least to railroads, express companies, street railways, telegraphs, telephones, gas, water, electric and power supply.

Then the necessary industrial establishments, auxiliary to all these systems should belong to the people.

Following these all the large scale productive equipment of the necessities of life should be **socially owned**. None of these things should be left to monopoly or market manipulation by private individuals.

The state should make laws permitting every township, county, or city to adopt the policy of public ownership and democratic management of **any form of local industry** that the people might elect—laundries, bakeries, shoe shops, clothing establishments, food depots, coal and wood yards &c.

**Taxation of the unearned increment of land values** and of unearned incomes will destroy land monopoly and thus keep the way open for homes, and farms, and co-operative farm colonies in the rural districts, and thus make for that isolation, and real freedom of the individual and of family life which Socialism seeks.

For a long time to come large fields of industry may be still left to private individuals. But the huge monopolies of transportation, communication and exchange and the giant trusts in the necessities and comforts of life, **must be transformed into socially owned utilities and run for public use and not for private profit.**

Such is the program of Socialism. In one sentence the object of Socialism is to establish Social Justice in the use of the basic means by which men live.

We propose to do this by due legislation. To carry such legislation we seek **to mass the workers and their sympathizers into a political party of their own** against all political parties or factions of the Capitalist class and their sympathizers.

### 3.—The Position Stated.

Now my argument is: That the general spirit and teaching, and the historical outlook of the Bible leads inevitably to a direct impeachment of the Capitalist System. If the Bible is truth, then the spirit and basis, the practice and outcome of Capitalism will stand accused and condemned as morally wrong, and the church should lead the people against that unjust and unrighteous Capitalist System.

And on the other hand: With the same standard of Bible judgment the general spirit and purpose and program of Socialism will be found to be a practical application to modern industrial problems of that humane spirit and ethical trend of the teaching of the Bible. And **the church should be in the very vanguard of the Socialist Movement** advocating this Socialist cause, and bulwarking Socialist legislation, and the Socialist reconstruction of industrial society.

The Social Conscience of the people, through the preaching of the social message of the Bible, should be awakened and turned against Capitalism as our common moral and social enemy. And that same moral and social energy should espouse this new messianic movement, and help to bring it to its sacred triumph over social injustice.

The Bible naturally divides itself into three epochal periods of moral and social teaching—(1) that of Moses, (2) of the prophets, and (3) of Jesus. In each of these we will find the most overwhelming moral support of the Socialist Movement.

## I.

## THE WORK OF MOSES.

The argument against Capitalism and for Socialism in the history of Moses stands out as plainly and unmistakably as the Great Pyramid on the sands of Egypt.

Here we have a plain story of industrial oppression—a set of dictators and lords of the people—a capitalist class of that period—living in idleness and splendor and extravagance on the product of the toil of the helpless working class, and controlling their means of existence. Pharaoh and his aristocracy of nobles and priests is a type of industrial tyranny strikingly like our present capitalism, allowing for the changes of centuries.

Listen to the simple Bible narrative: **“They did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens.** The Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigor. And they made their lives bitter with hard labor, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field.” They took away the straw and exacted the full day’s work. They increased their hours. The taskmasters speeded them up. And the foremen lost their jobs when they did not get the full tale of work out of the under slaves.

And finally these overworked, underfed, exhausted, broken-spirited workers cried out in anguish of spirit against their capitalistic oppressors. They sank down in despair in the face of their plutocratic masters. They were too fearful to resist as units, too ignorant to combine. They lacked the intelligence necessary for organized resistance. Their case was hopeless beyond words. The record of their sufferings and distress, their misery and poverty, is one long harrowing tale of Social Injustice and economic oppression, and industrial tyranny.

It is at this point in the tragedy of their slavery

that the name of God is introduced. Whoever God is, whatever guess any theology may offer us, the most striking character of the Divine Being as revealed in the books of Moses, is that **God is absolutely against the oppressor, no matter how steeped in religion Pharaoh and his soothsayers may be; and absolutely for the social deliverance of the exploited workers from industrial injustice.**

No juggling with Bible texts can ever make the common people ultimately believe that the God of Moses is a God whose spirit can give moral support to Capitalism, or to any other form of exploitation of human lives: "And the children of Israel sighed by reason of their bondage, and they cried, and their cry came up unto God by reason of their bondage." There you have it. God is here revealed as hearing the cry of physically exploited men, and directing a man to organize them for resistance to the oppressor. It is God who inspires him to lead them to social and economic freedom. And from first to last this character of God in the Mosaic account and this meaning to his presence in history never once takes a secondary place.

### **1.—The Work of Moses.**

Follow that Divine Voice in the first dialogue with Moses. Mark the awful simplicity and directness of the charge:

"I have surely seen the affliction of my people: The cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them."

Moreover, God does not seek for individualistic accusations of vice and drink and idleness against these people: "I have heard their cry **by reason of their taskmasters.**"

Still further. There is no religious message so-called about spiritual things. The priesthood of Egypt



never tired of defining God and expounding the doctrines of the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the dead. **God speaks to Moses concerning the social, economic, and industrial deliverance of the people**—a deliverance to an actual physical condition of industrial freedom in the world where they must get a living. The subject of thought is as materialistic as that of the rawest socialist on a soap-box.

And to Moses: "Come, now, therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou may'st bring forth my people out of Egypt." **Thus the distinct call of Moses was to be a labor leader, to inspire, organize, and free these exploited workers.**

Prof. Kent, in his recent critical book, "The Historical Bible," tells us that after biblical criticism has done its utmost with the books of Moses, the work of Moses as **a great social deliverer of a working class** from their economic oppressors, stands out in bold relief. He says that Moses experienced "a vivid conception of Jehovah's transcendent holiness and majesty," and immediately "an irresistible impression of the needs of the oppressed Hebrews, of the possibility of their deliverance and of his own obligation to return and lead them forth." The holiness and majesty of God is the inspiration of the Social Mission of Moses, and the ground of the economic emancipation for his people. And from first to last throughout his inspired career **this social saviorship never takes a secondary place.**

## 2.—The Career of Moses.

This mission, and this conception of God turns the whole course of his life. For this he attacks Pharaoh right upon his throne. His miracles are wrought for this purpose. To this end the plagues strike the oppressor. The passover is the commemorative feast of deliverance from the slave driver, as the Song of

Moses is the jubilee ode of their actual escape to free soil. The Sabbath was not instituted for religious gatherings or ceremonies of any kind, but as a day of rest and recuperation and recreation for man and beast, unlike the incessant toil of life under the task-masters. The mighty intercessory prayers of Moses are for bread and water—the first material necessities for his people, and type of all the physical basis of life. “If Jehovah delighteth in us,” cried Moses, “then he will bring us into this land which floweth with milk and honey . . . .” The judges he appointed to assist him were to be men who “hated unjust gain.” In the laws of Deuteronomy, Justice toward the resident alien, and kindness to the poor are urged “because Israel was a slave in the land of Egypt and Jehovah thy God redeemed thee.” All later Hebrew literature abounds in references to this event. **The words “Salvation” and “Redemption” are first used of their emancipation from their capitalistic exploiters.** The Psalms would be meaningless without this historic background. Amos and Hosea appeal to it as the supreme reason why Israel should be loyal to Jehovah. The goodness and power of God had been manifested in delivering them from the industrial oppressor and leading them to a land of plenty.

In forty long and tedious years the vision of complete social and economic freedom for his people never faded from the soul of this mighty man. Nothing could show more vividly how deeply this mission commanded his inmost being, and how vital it was in all his fellowship with God than the last sacred hour of his glorious career: “And Moses went to the top of Pisgah and Jehovah showed him all the land and said, ‘This is the land which I have promised with an oath . . . I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes’ . . . and Jehovah buried him . . . .”

The last thought of his life, the last sight of his eye, was not a disclosure of bliss in heaven for him-

self, **but the land of freedom on earth for his people.** How sublime! It was such a man of whom it is written, "Jehovah knew him face to face."

### **3.—Socialism in Canaan.**

It is significant to note that the three great social bases of the commonwealth founded in Canaan correspond exactly to three great demands of Socialism.

(1) **The land was socially owned**, and socially administered in behalf of all the tribes and all the families, the year of Jubilee securing again to any that which had been lost by the misfortunes of affairs. Landlordism was utterly forbidden and was practically unknown.

(2) **Interest on money or on any loan was absolutely prohibited.** "Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother, usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of anything that is lent upon usury." One of the most respectable and accredited methods of robbing the people in our time, is listed in the Mosaic code among the vilest of social crimes. On the contrary, gratuitous lending was commanded, lest the poor might fall under the greed of the money lender.

(3) The principle by which tools or **machinery was to be secured to the use of the workman** is strongly stated in the social law of the millstone. "No man shall take the nether or the upper millstone to pledge: for he taketh a man's life to pledge." Modern machinery is both the upper and nether millstone of the workers today, and indeed the very life basis of the working-class. The object of Socialism is to guarantee access of every worker to this means of life, now in the hands of the capitalist class. Every hour Capitalism continues "the upper and nether millstone" of modern machinery is being taken away from the people.



#### 4.—The Spirituality of Such Materialism.

This materialism of the Divine Being is a revelation of the deepest spirituality. God's determination to bring these people **out of industrial oppression** was his way of showing that the "heart of the Eternal is most wonderfully kind." **Your moral support of Capitalism and indifference to Socialism, by which the working class is kept in the grip of plutocracy is atheism and infidelity to that God.**

Moses' conviction that he could not live in peace with God unless he moved heaven and earth, seas and thrones to deliver these people from Social Injustice, was the revelation of his love to man, and of their interests up to the very highest.

God's materialism—his interest in land, money, tools, slaves, bread and water, for the people—is a revelation of the Spirituality of the Divine Nature. The corresponding Materialism of Moses is the simple open vision of his soul, that takes it for granted that a whipped slave is infinitely more valuable than all the obelisks, palaces, pyramids, and religious temples and paraphernalia that a proud, haughty and ruthless plutocracy can erect. **We would to God that the modern men who profess to speak for God could get baptized with the same materialism of Moses and Moses' God.**

The churches and preachers today who by open teaching or the consent of silence give moral support to Capitalism, are faithless to the Spirit of Jehovah, and are more akin to the priesthoods of Egypt that bulwarked Pharaoh in his oppression, than to this moral and spiritual giant who championed the cause of slaves, and lead them to economic freedom, this giant who inspires us of the Socialist Movement, even yet after forty centuries to a corresponding purpose and program. The church is called to repentance for its subservience to the modern Pharaohs.

This part of the Bible, I say, stands out against



Capitalism and for Socialism, **as plainly and unescapably to an honest heart as the Great Pyramid stands out on the sands of Egypt to an honest eye.**

I appeal to the simple hearts of thousands in the Christian churches and ask you how can you read this story of Moses, from your Bibles, and teach it to your children, **and then continue to uphold by your moral influence and by your votes this unjust Capitalist System?** If the same God who spoke to Moses speaks to you, can you not hear the call to come with us of the Socialist Movement and lead the people out from under this modern Pharaoh? Is it not an awful perversion of Scripture to so subdue its social teaching as to give moral support to this Juggernaut System? With all sincerity I ask you to renounce your sinful allegiance to such a wrong against humanity, and to cast in your lot with the struggling people against Capitalism. **"I have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters . . . . saith the Spirit . . . . come, now, and bring them forth to freedom."**

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## II

### THE PROPHETS.

The second great division of the Bible is the books of the prophets, a literature dating from about 800 B. C.

No writings in the world throb with such insistent impeachment of social and economic injustice and such powerful and irresistible appeals for social righteousness as the utterances of the Hebrew prophets. The excessive individualism of modern religion has almost entirely covered up the social significance of their wonderful message.

#### 1.—The Historical Setting of Their Message.

The Jews were then passing out of the simple agricultural stage into a commercial career among the

nations. The story of the social conditions in which these prophets appear reads like pages from the history of our own times, in which an age of machinery, and private capitalism, with all the attendant wrongs of rampant commercialism has drawn the people from the land and herded them in great cities, there to be exploited as helpless victims caught in the maelstrom of world-forces.

Historians of the time of Amos and Micah and Isaiah tell us that the newly developed trade fell into the hands of plutocrats as they trampled on the ancient laws. Wealth concentrated in the hands of the few. Huge private estates were formed out of the once common lands. The poor landowners were bought out or fell into the power of their rich creditors, or were ejected by violence and false judgment. The peasant proprietors were destroyed. The yeomanry perished. The cities grew apace, filled with the exiles from the land. Here they met the severest forces of commercialism.

The aristocracy racked their brains for **new ways of consuming the surplus wealth that they had wrung from the poor.** They built magnificent palaces furnished in ivory and beautified with art. They had summer houses and winter houses, town houses and country houses, while the poor were crowded in their miserable quarters. **This plutocracy enriched the temples of religion** with their generous gifts, and lavishly endowed the religious teachers of the day.

The masses were meanwhile ground down by oppression, and the cry of distress filled the land. Micah says that the wealthy "stripped the skin off the poor, and the flesh off their bodies." Zechariah declares that the rich and powerful dealt with the people as "buyers and sellers of sheep." Amos calls them to repent of a social injustice so dark as to "darken the earth in the clear day." **Isaiah pronounces Judgment on the ruling class:** "For ye have eaten

up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses! What mean ye that ye beat my people in pieces, and grind the faces of the poor?"

Such, then were the social conditions in Judah and Israel when the prophets burst upon them with the oracles of Jehovah.

## 2.—The Burden of Their Message.

Now what is the burden of the message of these men of God? Was it the message of the religious revivalist? Was it individualistic and ecclesiastical and priestly, **dealing only with the personal**, spiritual life and private morality, **ignoring the social needs of the people**, and the social sins incarnate in social institutions? Nay, verily. The very opposite is the case. **These prophets did not strain at gnats of individual sin and swallow camels of social injustice.** They dealt primarily with the social morality of the whole people, as a nation, as expressed in the institutions, functions, and practices of the national life.

These Hebrew prophets were **social reformers of the most radical type**, as the most casual reading of their lives and words will reveal. They caught the spirit of Moses and of Moses' God. Moses had conspired against the tyranny of Pharaoh, and organized the workers into a vast labor union and marched them to freedom. And the prophets resist the new social and industrial tyrannies of their own people, and plead the cause of Social Justice, for the poor.

Elijah attacked the king because of injustice in land inclosure, as the Socialists of England are doing today. To Elijah God was the refuge of the oppressed and the support of the weak against the mighty. The prophecies of Amos, Hosea, and Micah are almost wholly social and political, calling for social and economic righteousness. Joel calls upon the ministers of God to weep and wail over the industrial



distresses of the people: "All trees of the field are dried up; yea, joy is abashed and away from the children of men." He calls the priests to put on mourning and beat their breasts because, "the food is cut off—the garner is desolate—the corn is withered—the flocks huddle together." Ezekiel pronounces unmeasured woes upon the pastors who feed themselves but neglect the flock and **let the strong override the weak.** Jeremiah declares that he has been sent to pull down and to tear at unjust and unholy institutions, to build anew in righteousness—a revolutionist indeed who barely escaped with his life from kings and nobles and priests. **The first chapter of Isaiah is the bitterest attack in all sacred literature upon ceremonial religion that forgets Social Justice and social righteousness.** Victor Hugo puts Isaiah in his list of the greatest geniuses of history, and says, "He is the great reproacher—and fixes a date for oppressors—he stands at the threshold of civilization and refuses to enter."

Renan believes that this extraordinary development of prophetism is the main trunk of the religious history of the world. The aim of Jehovah, in taking pains that Israel should be educated as a holy people was **the triumph of Social Justice.** It is above all, by the conception of Providence and of Social Justice in the earth that the Hebrew development differs from all peoples. The Hebrew prophet never appeals to rewards and punishments beyond the grave. He hungers for Justice, and for speedy Justice. An unjust world, a world of oppressed humanity is in the eyes of God a monstrosity. The Day of the Lord is a day of Radical Revolution: the triumph of the weak, the confusion of the mighty. **They were unable to divide politics and religion.** They invaded the whole struggle for existence with ethical insight as the oracle of Jehovah. At a time when the idea of right scarcely existed, these extraordinary men assumed the position of **defenders of the weak and the oppressed.**



They attacked kings, nobles and judges, and resisted the "worst of all tyrannies—the connivance of ignorant crowds with a degraded priesthood."

My contention is that the message of the prophets, in spirit and in detail, is a powerful ethical impeachment of the whole spirit, practice, and unjust basis of modern Capitalism. And the logic of the spirit and historical outlook of these great Hebrew radicals is directly behind and within the spirit, purpose and program of the Socialist Movement of our time. I could ask no grander or more tremendous impetus to the Social Revolution than a saturation of the mind of the working class with the unequalled fervor and vision of these great inspired Tribunes of the People, these Heralds of Justice.

### 3.—Social Justice—No Substitutes.

There is one supreme distinction of the message of the prophets which is particularly an argument for the Socialist Cause, and pre-eminently the religious need of our time. The prophets absolutely repudiated the three grand, imposing substitutes and counterfeits for social righteousness always offered by decadent priesthods whose spiritual teaching bulwarks social injustice. These three substitutes are: (1) correct theology, with an accompanying pharisaism in morals, and charity-mongering; (2) mere religious emotionalism; and (3) ritualism and ceremony. These three the prophets of Israel had to meet.

The religious consciousness is fundamental in man. If that consciousness does not find **normal expression in human brotherhood, and right social and economic relations**, then it will become prostituted in abnormal forms of expression. **If any man does not want Social Justice in the use of land and machinery for bread-getting, and to secure life and liberty to the worker he does not want anything for humanity.**

Any religion that dodges this issue and practices substitutes is vain. These three substitutes for real righteousness have to be punctured in order to fully reveal the will of God as simply love and freedom—**love and freedom in actual human relations of our common work-a-day life.**

1. The first substitute generally offered for real downright Social Justice among men is **correct dogma.** Even to this day this is a pleasant release for the powerful oppressors of mankind. The hundred richest exploiters and trustmakers in America are members of churches. And tens of thousands of the richest profit-mongers in the various cities are prominent church men. They believe, or say they believe, or at least give assent to the accepted orthodoxy. It is not only easy, but popular, and profitable.

This exaltation of orthodox opinion and assent to dogma over simple love and brotherhood and tender Justice among men dates from the adulteration of primitive Christianity by Greek philosophy. **There is scarcely a hint of it in the teaching of Jesus.** So it is with the Hebrew prophets. They did not expound philosophical doctrines or speculative religious dogmas. They appealed to the heart, to the conscience—to the **social conscience.** And when they appealed they did not deal with trivial offenses, or petty sins, but with the manifest sins that were blighting the nation—sins that any man might see any time he cared to look.

In this respect the Socialist Movement is singularly identical in spirit and moral trend with the message of the prophets.

2. The second grand substitute for social democracy, as the basic element in the practical religious life is **religious emotionalism.** The cultivators of this substitute in the times of the prophets are among the "false prophets" so fearfully berated in the prophetic literature. One class consisted of a sort

of emotional evangelists "filled with an infectious enthusiasm by which they excited each other." Even Saul "got under the power," stripped off his clothes and lay prostrate a day and a night. The other group of these "false prophets" were simply preachers like many today without vision, who were quite at peace with existing evils. **"They were not always conscious liars. They were the mouthpiece of the average opinion."** A passage from Prof. Geo. Adam Smith will reveal at once the secret of their false prophecy, and show how it affected their relation to the rich and the poor: "Micah's tyrants, too, had religion to support them. A number of hireling prophets whom we have seen both Amos and Hosea attack, gave their blessing to the social system which crushed the poor, for they shared its profits." (Mark the modern parallel which the Social Revolution discloses.) "Those false prophets lived upon the alms of the rich, and flattered according as they were fed." At Ahab's table sat four hundred of these fellows—"subservience to the powerful had made them liars." "To them Micah devotes the second oracle of chapter three. And we find confirmed by his words the principle that in that age the true prophet was what it has been in every age since then till now—**an ethical difference**, and not a difference of dogma, or tradition, or ecclesiastical note. The false prophet spoke, consciously or unconsciously, for himself and his living. **He sided with the rich; he shut his eyes to the social condition of the people; he did not attack the sins of the day.** This made him false, robbed him of insight and the power of prediction. But the true prophet exposed the sins of the people. Ethical insight and courage, burning indignation of wrong, **clear vision of the facts of the day**—this was what Jehovah's spirit put into him, this was what Micah felt to be inspiration."

Now it is a remarkable fact that whenever in the



Christian centuries emphasis has been placed on some special phase of **religious emotionalism** as a test of discipleship, instead of **determined conscious good-will to men**, religion has become degraded, and easily trifles with real social righteousness, and strains at gnats of personal conduct. We can see this in any village or city right now.

The Socialist Movement exposes great social and industrial iniquities, giant wrongs, colossal economic robberies and indeed murders of the people, the tyranny of the plutocracy and all the unrighteousness directly inherent in Capitalism. Socialism like the prophets is not inspiring a passing emotion of pity or sympathy, or philanthropy, but is calling the determined conscious intelligent will of masses of men to **the establishment of Social Justice in actual everyday human relations**. In this respect the moral fervor, and historical direction of Hebrew prophetism finds its modern counterpart more nearly in the Socialist Movement than in any other movement or institution of our times, the church not excepted.

3. **The Prophets and ritual.** But the supreme attack of the prophets was upon the religion of ritualism and ceremonialism. As long as the people thought that God could be pleased with prayers, and songs, and ceremonies, and the repetition of formulae, on stated high and holy days, and sacred services conducted by robed and dignified religious officials—as long as the religious consciousness spent itself in this way, the prophets could make no headway in getting the people really right with God, nor could they free the people from the injustice that was rampant and **unquestioned in the midst of all this palaver**.

The issue is plain, I am sure. Surely there can be no true service or worship of the living God **that does not lovingly and devotedly serve humanity**. Surely there can be no true service to humanity that



leaves men the victims of poverty, misery, unemployment, and the tragedies of the struggle for mere bread, in the presence of colossal trusts in control of a handful of plutocrats, that rob and plunder the people, and gamble with the resources of the nation. Surely, surely any effort to please God with religious palaver while ignoring these supreme wrongs and awful sufferings—surely such is a delusion and a snare. And so the prophets taught. And so Jesus taught later as he saw the rich devouring widows' houses and seeking to strike a balance with God by their long prayers. And with this the Socialist Movement agrees.

**(a)—Amos Attack on Mere Ritualism.**

Amos the first and one of the greatest of the prophets, makes ceremonial religion the "chief target of his shafts." He saw the people, under the guidance of their religious leaders, pouring the energy of the religious consciousness into their pleasing religious exercises on the Sabbath and other holy days. To go to the temple or church, to chant the sacred songs, to repeat the prayers—all of this became a sanctioned routine, offered as specially pleasing to God. To neglect it was to be "ungodly." And it became a most **pleasant and profitable substitute for real social and economic righteousness** as it is this very day in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles. Such a substitute actually hides the living God, dulls the Social Conscience, and makes insight on the great wrongs and corresponding remedies, almost impossible. Perhaps some devoted church member is now reading these lines. **How much time and energy do you give to Social Justice—to the Economic Freedom of the people? How much do you care? Is the subject on your mind?**

To Amos, Judgment must begin at the house of God. Not that Amos wished to attack this pleasing "churchianity" of his time as a thing in itself. He

attacked it because the people made it take the place of real Social Righteousness, and gave moral sanction to the wrong social conditions. We of the Socialist Movement think we go far when we declare that modern religion, by its silence concerning Capitalism, is bulwarking Social Injustice. Amos went further. **He looked upon these religious places as the very fountain of the social corruption,** for the reason that the big preachers and religious functionaries of that time were admitted to councils of state, associated with the plutocrats of the time, and became associated in feelings and interests with the corrupt and tyrannical aristocracy. **Amos utterly repudiated the entire cult and all its doings. He scorned it. He ridiculed it. He caricatured it.** In one place after an outburst upon it, in which he calls the very worship blasphemy and transgression, he actually goes on to say, in the original Hebrew, "The house of God shall go to the devil!" For thus neglecting the real human interests of the people, they had made it no longer the house of God.

God is represented as speaking through Amos with the utmost abhorrence of the whole ceremonial activity and in the same breath calls for the real righteousness of Justice in the national life. "I hate, I loathe your festivals," saith the Lord. "Your thank-offering of fatted calves, I will not look at them." To their religious music, the finest the art of the day could produce, God will stop his ear. "Let cease from me the noise of thy song! To the playing of thy viols I will not listen. . . . **but let Justice roll on like water and righteousness like an unfailing stream.**" Nothing could be simpler or plainer than this.

### (b)—The Denunciation of Isaiah.

Isaiah adds his terrible denunciation of this substitute of mere church-going, and psalm-singing, and religious ceremonial generally. No commentary can

add vigor to the vehement scorn of the old prophet to the whole of it. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord. I am full of the burnt offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts. . . . Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me. . . . Your prayer meeting even, is iniquity . . . yea, when ye make many prayers I will not hear, **for your hands are full of blood,**" (the blood of human beings suffering the social Injustice of the time.) . . . . therefore **"Seek Justice . . . . . relieve the oppressed . . . . .** then though your sins be red like crimson they shall be as wool."

**Thus we see the bitterness of the attack on formal religion made by the prophets was made because the preachers and people poured their moral and religious energy into religiousness instead of into righteousness.** Such a state of affairs had to be interrupted. Judgment had to begin at the house of God. And the same has had to happen again and again in human history ever since. And the same must now occur again. The Socialists have no reason to meddle with any form of religion that people may choose to indulge in. But when that religion exalts itself as the will of God over the souls of the people, and turns the moral energies of the people **away from the simple righteousness of brotherhood and Social Justice, and thus actually sustains and sanctifies Capitalism,** then it is open to attack as a menace to the freedom of the people on the ground of being a moral sanction to economic tyranny and injustice.

All the modern critics of the prophetic literature make this Social Radicalism stand out supreme. There are not two sides to the question. Whatever else these mighty men were, whatever other elements can be gathered from their writings, and there are such, **this social revolutionism in the name of Jehovah is pre-eminent.** If any prominent preacher



in New York or London should fill his sermons or books with such vehement social teachings, so plain, straight, undiluted, and frequent, he would become a nuisance to our respectable church-going classes. No petty moralising or eloquent treatment of other themes sandwiched in would atone for such utterance concerning the supreme curse of our time.

**The logic of an honest sympathetic hearkening to the message of the Hebrew prophets makes a man a Socialist in our day—an avowed, aggressive antagonist of Capitalism. Thus the second great division of Scripture stands for Socialism.**

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### III.

#### THE LIFE OF JESUS.

The Bible is the most dangerously radical book ever placed in human hands. The secret of the revolutionary character of the Bible is that nothing ever read by man places such **infinite value upon human personality** as does this book. Presumably it is a revelation of God: actually it is an interpretation of human values as opposed to every other value in the world.

We have seen how in the mind of Moses who knew God face to face the meanest slave in the clay pits of Egypt was infinitely more valuable than the dynasties of kings. **Democracy buds early in this dangerous book.** As for the prophets, even their vision of Jehovah, seems at times to be simply background in which to set the value of human personality. They defy kings, ridicule priesthoods and attack judges, for the sake of the common people. But when we come down to the prophet of Nazareth, every other value seems to fade to nothingness, and the meanest outcast, the lowest mudsill, the most neglected and forgotten specimen of humanity lights up as



a gem in a dark place, and is clothed by his vision in a radiance transcendent.

Men may wrangle forever over the theologies that they think they dig out of the gospels, but on this supreme value in the mind of Jesus of the commonest human life, the least and the last, there is no dispute. He did not love fame or power or money. He did not love himself. He did not love his own life. **He cared for nothing but human beings.** And if any received more care in his thought than others, they were those neglected by the rest, the disregarded and unthought of by the ruling classes in church and state.

No mere marshalling of texts from the Gospels will suffice us to prove or disprove whether the teaching of Jesus leads to the **impeachment of Capitalism and the defence of Socialism**—though even by this method also we Socialists have it all our own way. We must somehow get a cross-section of the spirit, feel the inner pulse of that majestic character in history, before we can satisfactorily make our argument and appeal.

There is something in the Gospels that transcends writers, texts, doctrines, parables and miracles. It is a life—a life as intangible as light—a spirit. **It is the soul of which that wonderful story is merely the body.** It is the disclosure of this soul of the Gospels that shall uncover the inhumanity of Capitalism and reveal the Socialist movement as a new coming of the same Christ-spirit once more in the human drama.

**There is an unmistakable democratic coloring to the whole career of Jesus that makes him an historical heritage of the common people.** Had not theologies and ecclesiasticism distorted the simple story, struggling slaves, and social outcasts, and the people baffled by kings, tyrants, lords and capitalist exploiters, in all the centuries would revere the name of Jesus, as a veritable **hero of the common people.**

This democratic coloring of the career of Jesus is not without **vast social significance**. Joseph was a carpenter at a bench, his mother a peasant girl. While she bears her unborn child, Mary sings a revolutionary song in this wise: "He hath put down the mighty from their seats, he hath exalted them of low degree. The poor he hath filled with good things: the rich he hath sent empty away." It was to a group of the commonest laborers, namely shepherds, not to priests at the temple or kings at court, that the announcement of his birth was first made. Crowded out of the poorest lodging house, Mary gives birth to her babe in a stable—no kings, no priests, no ruling class, no aristocracy, present. When he makes his first public appearance, it is in association with a socialistic agitator, a wild unkempt Elijah, an unordained, unscheduled, unofficial prophet who was later put to death, Josephus tells us, as a dangerous demagogue. John was castigating the ruling classes, particularly those of the church of his time, and a hint of his social message is seen in the phrase: "He that hath two coats give to him that hath none; he that hath meat do likewise." It was under the hands of this man, surrounded by a crowd of common people, that Jesus was filled with the overwhelming sense of his Messiahship.

When he enters upon his own public work he accepts no official dignities, calls his helpers from the ranks of greasy fishermen, and on the roadside, or hillside, or seaside **talks to the common people who tread at his heels and hear him gladly**. His meetings are destitute of any religious ceremony whatever—prayer, song, liturgy or ritual—as informal and natural as the grouping of autumn leaves by the wind of October. **He even warns his hearers against praying in public at all**—and prayer is at once the simplest and the greatest religious ceremony. He paid no attention to the gorgeous temple of God glittering

on Mt. Moriah and declared that the dirtiest vagrant in his motley crowd was the temple of the living God. He lashed the ruling class in church and state—the Sadducee and Pharisee—with merciless castigation for the simple reason that they stood between the common people and real freedom. Explain it as you may **he blessed the poor and pronounced woes upon the rich**, and though preachers in all centuries since have tried to bulge the needle's eye to let the rich into the kingdom of heaven, he left it as he first stated it. He warned against laying up treasures on earth, perhaps for the simple reason **that treasure chests can not be filled by the product of one's own labor. All the great fortunes of the world are wrung from the labors of others by unjust social conditions.** His triumphal entry into Jerusalem is on an ass with the simple populace strewing the palm branches. It was not in the homes of the common people, but at the house of the high priest that they plotted to kill him. It was cash out of the church box that was handed to Judas. And in the final tragedy on Calvary he died with common thieves, and **while the respectable rulers of church and state watched his life ebb away, he drew the criminal close to his heart in an eternal embrace.**

Jesus, the Carpenter of Nazareth, is the Democracy of God Incarnate—of God, who is no respecter of persons, each and every man of infinite value, value as deep as the Eternal. Such a quality of life as this of the Nazarene, if it be accredited as truth and not fanaticism, must over and over again precipitate the world in revolution upon revolution until men are free. No wonder that he said, "I come not to send peace but a sword."

Three things must inevitably follow any devoted study of the Life and Teachings of Jesus. (1) The heart will be turned to see the divine value of human beings, as such, irrespective of culture, education,



wealth, position, spiritual development, or any other thing whatsoever—**divine in his own right.** (2) The study of the Life of Jesus inevitably produces **the reformer's conscience.** "As the Father hath sent me even so send I you: And I lay down my life for the sheep. Follow me and I will make you deliverers of the people." A conscience at peace with Social Injustice crushing human life can never be christian. Such a conscience can easily join church but cannot follow the Christ. (3) This spirit of enthusiasm for humanity can never rest in mere charity and philanthropy. The logic of such character is the full demand of **social democracy**—democracy realized in all the social and industrial activities of our common work-a-day life. The spirit of Christ can find no rest in our day until a truly human existence is guaranteed by Social Justice to every human being.

Vested interests, social castes, artificial dignities, power of man over man enthroned in law, or church, or official functions—all have felt the shock of this Interrupter of history—the gentle Nazarene—glorifying the sacredness of the elemental man. **Another shock is now overdue,** and the net result of this real Christianity in history will sooner or later lodge its momentum against Capitalism. The new Christianity, which will be the old restored, will find its world current through the International Socialist movement.

In the last analysis, this universal gamble in land, and machinery, and the products of human labor, on a capitalistic world market, **is a gamble in the very bodies and souls of men.** These material things are the bases of their lives, and the ground of all human release.

To monopolize land, to control the markets, to gamble with human necessities, to foster trusts in machinery and means of transportation; to use the tremendous powers of new inventions to put uncounted



millions in the hands of the rich; to make human labor a mere commodity on the labor market, while the workers struggle man against man for a bare living; to make the whole world of industry a vast field for the ruthless and unhindered operation of the greed, avarice and ambition of private individuals and private corporations for their private enrichment, **is to turn the bodies and souls of men, women and children of the working classes into the merest pawns, and playthings, and victims of the plutocracy.**

This is the essence of Capitalism, and it is utterly contrary to that sublime vision of the sacredness of human life which is the soul of the Christ message and spirit. Such a system is a monstrosity to the democratic spirit of the Christian system. It stands condemned without appeal.

The exacting Angel of History is about to foreclose a long mortgage on the church. You have assumed to interpret the oracles of God. You have declared your love for souls. You have announced the eternal value of the soul. **But if a man is valuable anywhere he is valuable everywhere.** If a human being is the supreme value in heaven in the presence of God, then he is the supreme value this morning at the factory gates. The Angel of History declares to the church: "Yea, verily, the value of souls is incalculable. Therefore you are called upon now to overthrow that **vast gamble in human souls known as Capitalism** and establish on earth a social system of industry, in which human life shall be the first value; a system in which the equipment for making a living shall be administered for universal human needs and human freedom, instead of for private profit of a ruthless plutocracy, **which rides to industrial and financial power over the bruised and broken lives of the toiling masses.**"

This is the program of the Socialist Movement. **And no greater curse could fall upon the modern**

**church than to disprove the argument herewith presented.** The curse of upholding Capitalism is already too heavy upon the church. Only long, faithful, and selfless championship of the cause of the poor and the working classes against the exploiting plutocracy and distinctly against Capitalism will redeem the church from the dark cloud that now hangs over her. I could covet for the preachers no greater service to humanity, and for the church no greater mission, at this juncture of history, than to assist in the peaceful and speedy re-construction of the Social Order, the transformation of Capitalism into the Socialist Commonwealth.

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Whether therefore we follow Moses to the court of Pharaoh to resist the proud tyrant, or go with Amos to the House of God, there to jeer with him at the subtle hypocrisy and to cry for Justice to roll down like a stream, or whether we catch the spirit of the Carpenter of Nazareth, the whole mighty and cumulative volume of the divine energy of the Bible leads us irresistibly against Capitalism the modern Pharaoh, the modern anti-Christ. And that same energy urges us on to lead the people to that new Canaan, the Co-operative Commonwealth, and to that new Messianic Age—the **establishment of Social Justice in the means of getting our living on the earth.**

The Bible is against Capitalism and for Socialism. We summon the common conscience of mankind to the sacred issue! Wherever a simple, honest, good-hearted man or woman of any sect, seeking to be a Christian, reads these lines I pray you for the sake of humanity to heed the word of truth now offered to you.

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There is an old saying, "Convince a man against his will, he's of the same opinion still." The coercive

argument presented in the foregoing pages, seems absolutely unanswerable. But that will not suffice. Suppose we do prove in irresistible logic that whoever would be a Christian in our day must also be a Socialist. Words will not suffice. Convincing argument is not enough. How often do I feel this on the platform. We need the good-will that hurries to act on genuine conviction, that is ready to sacrifice for a sacred cause, and to suffer loss, if need be for the Kingdom of God. It is to be hoped that all through this argument there is a breath of that spirit which inspires men and women to consecrated devotion to a holy cause; that on every page the heart, the will has been moved to action.

Do not complain either that there is no direct appeal to the individual in terms of individual salvation. That is a perfectly legitimate appeal, but it is not the direct purpose of this booklet. The purpose of these pages is to appeal to the common social conscience of the people, and particularly to the conscience of Christians through the Scriptures, and persuade you to espouse the Socialist Cause. It is an appeal to you to apply the righteousness of the Kingdom of God to the Social and Industrial life.

# The Kingdom of God and Socialism.

## I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

**T**HERE are two terms\* in our subject which need some brief definition before we can adequately consider the theme as a whole.

#### **I. Social Evolution.**

By Social Evolution we mean the development of human relations and activities from lower and simpler forms to higher and more complex forms ; we mean that advance from conditions which hinder and mar and blight human life, to conditions which free and glorify human life. By Social Evolution we mean that process by which social forms and economic structures which are the outgrowth of ignorance and animalism in society are supplanted by social and industrial forms which are the expression of intelligence, and the incarnation of goodwill and human brotherhood.

In such a definition of Social Evolution we take for granted that history is a progressive realisation of the Kingdom of God in the Earth. Such a definition accepts the word of Jesus: "Every plant, every institution, every economic system—that my Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." History is not the toss of events back and forth between static parties or isolated personalities. It is a struggle and victory, to be sure, but the ground of the battle moves and the goal is ever nearer. The advance is from cruelty to kindness ; from strife and

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\* See prefatory "Word" on opposite page.



antagonism to mutualism ; from war to peace ; from greed to fellowship ; from egoism to altruism ; from the struggle for Self to the struggle for the Life of Others. Social Evolution is from the Cain-spirit, whose watchword is the ruthless " Am I my brother's keeper ? " to the Christ-spirit, which says " I lay down my life for the sheep."

Modern critical study of races, and nations, and social movements, in the new science of sociology, both static and dynamic, justifies the intuitive hope and sustains the faith of the soul, **that the Kingdom of God in the earth is the disclosing reality of social evolution, for which all else is mere scaffolding.**

## **2.—The Divine Immanence.**

The second term in our subject is " The Divine Immanence." In defining the divine, words, indeed, do but half reveal and half conceal the truth we feel. We have revelations of the soul, but when we seek words of the intellect to express what we mean, we falter. It is no wonder that the ancient Jews lost the pronunciation of their word for the deity.

We are, I think, without an adequate term to express the conception of God that is coming to us. All theology has abandoned, if not in words, then surely in the inner spiritual life, the older and more extreme statement of a transcendent deity. Before the transcendent deity of Judaism, the Eastern religions had an immanent deity in pantheism. But we can never mean by immanence what they mean by pantheism.

I must confess that the phrase " divine immanence " suggests to me pantheistic, interpretations of God. And we know that all such interpretations pushed to the extreme in personal experience, even as exhibited in the experience of some of the saints, are the negation of the supreme Christian pur-

pose as already suggested in our definition of the social evolution. The word "immanence" is not sufficiently dynamic for our more recent views of the Kingdom of God in the earth. We are without a word in philosophy or theology, and fall back on the word of Jesus, the Kingdom of God. I rather wish that our subject had been "The Kingdom of God and Social Evolution." No phrase so comprehends the personal and the social, the spiritual and the economic significance of life in one word, as does the word of Jesus. In this paper I shall define briefly what I feel to be the Divine Reality which is not completely realised in intellect by any single word—either by the philosophical opposites, transcendence and immanence, or by the mystical word Presence, which I shall frequently use.

### **3.—The Older Teaching.**

Theology for many a long century has been heavily laden by its inheritance from Judaism, so far as the conception of God is concerned. In order to declare the holiness and righteousness of God, and to show how transcendently beyond the average human life, and the prevailing conditions of human society, were the ways of the Lord of Hosts, the Hebrew mind placed God completely out of his world. God was a mighty Monarch, ruling a distant rebellious province, but making occasional visitations against the unjust and impious, and coming at intervals to reveal himself in power on behalf of the faithful and devout. The truth behind this conception, however faulty the theological statement, can never be forfeited without incalculable loss to the spiritual life.

### **4.—The Modern Perception.**

But whether it has been the influence of our philosophical criticism and scientific investigation of the last

century, starting from and returning to the perception of universality and unity ; or whether it has been a truer interpretation of the meaning of the words of Jesus, and a deeper realisation of his spirit, **it has now fallen to us modern men in a special manner to perceive intellectually, and to seek to realise in our spiritual consciousness more fully the actual, ever-abiding, unescapable Presence of the Eternal Intelligence and Love, as the only Life and Power and Reality of all that is—whether in Nature, or History, or the Individual Soul.**

To be at all we are compelled to have our being in the Father. In Him we have our being. In Him we have our life. In Him we move. More clear conception of this Truth, and more conscious realisation of this Reality, and more perfect definition of it in the transparent words of intellect, and more practical expression of it in our social and economic life, will be, no doubt, the supreme programme of religious thought and practice in the century upon which we have entered. In the language of the Master of Balliol, in those wonderful Gifford lectures, such a religion must “unite the immanence of pantheism with the transcendence of monotheism” ; it must “rise to a divine principle of all things, and yet be able to conceive that principle as the living God, the inspiring source and eternal realisation of the moral ideal of man . . . such a religion must see God at once without and within us, yet it must be able to discriminate between the higher sense in which He is within and not without. It must see God in nature, without losing Him in nature’s manifoldness ; and in history without making outward success the criterion of his favour. It must find a still higher revelation of Him in the protest of the conscience against the fact of successful injustice, and a demand of the heart for a more perfect state than has ever been empirically realised in earth ; yet it must not set that which *ought to be* absolutely against

that which *is*, or suppose that the Judgment of God is a future Judgment, which is not executing itself now and here."

### 5.—The Moral Depths Involved.

What this Divine Presence means I shall be compelled to treat later when I come to discuss the personal experience of Jesus, and we shall leave the definition now as given ; suffice it to say that our consideration of the Divine Presence in all its new setting and bearings is not a mere question of theological hair-splitting, and far from a petty attack on any old theology. It is blood-red with vital significance for us. It is our search for a closer walk with God, and for a diviner service to our brother-men. It is a muscular endeavour of the mind to state in faithful terms of our intelligence the revelations and intuitions of the soul from the living God of the present. Our theme is not abstract and theoretical, but living, concrete, practical.

Moreover, our consideration of the relation of the Divine Presence to social evolution, is not a mere discussion for the doctrinaire or the intellectual gymnast. **Western civilisation is in the midst of social sorrows, economic injustice, and industrial oppression which cry to heaven for redress, and we must square our religious teaching and practice with the Truth that makes men free—with the manifest call of God to our generation.** We need our working clothes on to ask the theme, and our militant armour on to follow it to its logical conclusion.

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## II.

### **THE REDEMPTION OF NATURE.**

In the light of the Divine Immanence we state more emphatically, if possible, than the Jewish prophets that



"the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof." To define the exact relation of the Divine Omnipresence and Substance to the creation, and especially to the land of this earth, and to the forces of nature which we utilise—such definition may be beyond our present intelligence. But we may say with Paul that the very creation groaneth and travaileth in pain waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God. And as the illumined sons of Truth and Love appear it will become more and more fully acknowledged and axiomatic that the physical resources of the earth, and the forces of nature in which the earth is enveloped, are the veritable presence of the living God for the satisfaction and freedom of man.

### **1.—The Land for the People.**

The earth and her enveloping and permeating Force constitute the living fountain, and the eternal cupboard, and the divine storehouse of every physical and material gift for the perfect satisfaction of every physical need of the children of men. And let us not be interpreted as speaking poetically, but in the plain terms of a righteous social economy. The land of the earth was given by the Father for the use and delight of all men—not for the few, who, by any means, legal or illegal, may secure private possession thereof for their private profit. The Divine Presence did not store the cellars of the earth full of coal and oil and iron in order that when opened in the 20th century, coal barons, and steel magnates, and oil billionaires should control these treasure-vaults of the earth, enslaving the children of men in the mines, and then bleeding the nation by monopoly sale of these gifts of God in nature. The fertility of the soil, the descent of rain, the titanic powers of steam and electricity, the tremendous power of machinery—all such are the gifts of the Father of us all, for the satisfaction of the needs of all His children.

These are not mere baubles and playthings to amuse and delight the profit-monger in the satisfaction of his greed or ambition.

## **2.—The Earth is our Mother.**

It has been said that the earth is our mother—changing the figure. If so, the hour has struck in the history of man's life on the bosom of the earth to end the monopoly by the few—whether by kings in the Congo, or millionaires at home—of the abundant nourishment of the earth. **The time has come to restore the breasts of the mother to the children.** For they cry bitterly in the night of our social and economic ignorance; and they wither and die for the milk flowing from the mother-breasts of the earth—that abundant supply—now controlled by the few for their private profit.

If the Divine Immanence is perceived as Life and Truth and Reality, rather than as a mere theological doctrine of a new ecclesia, held as a vague abstract pantheism, or a poetic view of nature, then we shall be able to teach and to put into our economic structure the political economy of Jesus as given in the Sermon on the Mount.

## **3.—The Socialism of Jesus.**

The Word of Jesus is "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." Now, the service of God is only possible by the service of our brother men, in justice and fellowship. No temple worship of any kind or degree can be substituted. **It is absurd and superstitious to say we love God, whom we have not seen, if we do not free and make the possibilities of life complete for our brothers whom we have seen.** Such, at least, is the service of God. On the other hand, the very root and fostering condition of mammonism is the utilisation of the gifts

and forces of nature for private profit rather than for the social good. To this bear witness Moses, and the prophets, and Jesus.

And Jesus proceeds: "Doth not the heavenly Father feed the birds of the air? Doth He not nourish and beautify the lilies of the field by His very Life and Power in soil and sunshine? Shall he not much more clothe and feed you, O, ye of little faith? Is not infinite provision made for your every necessity, and your every comfort?" But how? By some miracle? Nay. By the higgles of the market, by the strife of competition, by the individualistic struggle of each against all for the control of land and machine and product and profit? Nay, verily! How then? **By making it our first business, by seeking first, to establish with each other in our relations and economic activities social justice and equality of opportunity and co-operative use of industrial equipment.**

Such I believe to be the exact modern equivalent in bread and butter issues of Jesus' words: "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all things shall be added unto you." Then shall life be indeed more than meat, and the body than raiment. It is little else now, and scarcely that, for millions in the intense competition for bread and labour.

#### 4.—The New Social Order.

The Divine Immanence sheds abundant light upon the truth that the earth and the fulness thereof is the Lord's common gift to all men. To monopolise these gifts for private gain is the very soul of mammonism. It is an undivine use of nature.

From henceforth if we would serve the living God it is of supreme importance that whistles blow, and wheels turn, and that material goods be produced and distributed under the auspices of the prayer that says,

"Give us (not me) our daily bread," and of the teaching of Jesus, that we cannot serve Mammon and God.

The logical outcome of the Divine Immanence is this: **The socialisation and democratic management of the basic natural and mechanical equipment of industry, as the Divine Presence for the Life and Labour of all the People.** This will be, indeed, the communion of the Holy Spirit—the whole spirit—now so broken by our divisive private interests. And the sacrament of this communion will be the now despised labour power of man—the flesh and blood of the common man. It will be sacred once more in human history. This is, as you observe, the economic programme of Socialism: The Socialisation of the means of Production, Distribution, and Exchange, to be controlled by a Democratic State in the interests of the entire community, and the complete Emancipation of Labour from the Domination of Capitalism and Landlordism, with the establishment of Social and Economic Equality between the sexes.

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### III.

## THE REDEMPTION OF HISTORY.

Again, in the light of the Divine Immanence a new glory is shed upon the historical struggle of man for his freedom. The historical process is no longer a chaos of events, the picturesque procession of emperors, and czars, and princes, and dignitaries. It is the exfoliation of God in the people. As there is a red strand in all the cordage of the British navy, **so the red strand in the whole course of human events is the disclosure and release of a free and divine humanity.**



God is in the people. History is of one piece. There is no secular history. It is all sacred. Humanity is one body. God is no respecter of persons, much as it may run against our social or ecclesiastical vanity. And thus the so-called secular struggle of slaves in Egypt, or under Spartacus, or of the German peasants, or of the modern trades unionists for a more complete basis of physical existence, is covered with the Glory of God.

### 1.—The Freedom of the People First.

**The one sacred thing beneath the stars is a human being. That alone is sacred which makes man free to live out a complete human life.** The historical struggles for religious, and intellectual, and political freedom, and now for industrial emancipation, are the very birth-pangs of the coming of the divine in human society. Freedom is the only atmosphere in which the soul of man as the divine incarnation can breathe. The struggle of man in history for freedom is the struggle of God for freedom. This is loose and inexact phrasing I admit. But I seek to convey the thought that **the perception of Freedom in the Soul of Man is his highest revelation of God.** Our highest perceptions of moral and social relations in Freedom and Justice and Brotherhood, as achieved in history, and still to be demonstrated, are not dreams and vagaries, but are our open revelation of the Divine Reality.

This is the Kingdom of Heaven which is ever at hand. This is the Divine Immanence redeeming history from fatalism and pessimism, and giving us a ground for the most heroic and abandoned and devoted service to the highest freedom and welfare of all the people here and now in this present world. It will mean the reconstruction of social, political, and industrial institutions, in order that each and all may have the most complete advantage, opportunity, and equipment of

living a free human life. **It is not our first business to convert souls to our particular theology, or religion, or idea of personal piety or salvation. It is not our business to build up a church ; it is the business of the church to build a free world. Our first business is the matter-of-fact, apparently secular, social task of making each man, woman, and child free to live his or her own life,** and then perchance they shall teach us truth, and salvation, and theology of which we do not yet dream. Freedom first ! Freedom first ! We need not sigh for heaven in some distant realm with such a divine reality as *Freedom* present to us in the historical process. If this world is a "vale of tears," it is our business not to desert it for fairer worlds on high, but to wipe away all tears from human eyes, by wiping away the social and economic conditions which blight and baffle and bruise the bodies and minds and souls of men.

Henry Drummond suggested that perhaps the evolutionary process was devised by the Divine Intelligence in order that on its discovery by us we should also discover that indeed we were the builders and social creators of the Kingdom of God in the Earth. The raw material is presented for our workmanship, not to gamble with.

## **2.—The Sacred Cause of Labour.**

In the light of the Divine Presence labour statistics the productive power of machinery, truths on the housing problem, the cost of making shoes or hats, the process of sterilising milk, the meaning of land values, the care of mothers, the nourishment of the school-child—all these matter-of-fact and raw subjects, together with what they suggest of speeches, propaganda, balloting, and parliamentary action—all take on a divine significance. **The social struggle of the people for freedom is the historic revelation of the Christ.**

It may be that as the Father honoured the fields and roadsides of Palestine, and the fish-smelling boats of Galilean fishermen with a glory unapproachable 1,900 years ago, while the magnificence of the great temple, the grandeur of the temple service, and the show of the broad phylactery were ignored, if not condemned, **so now in the 20th century the most common-place efforts of the very mud-sills of society to achieve industrial and social emancipation from the crime of capitalism, will be honoured by the divine recognition**, while the Lord of Life may pass by our magnificent religious edifices, and our stately ceremonial, or our every form of worship. May we recognise the Christ as He approaches. **Not only in such an hour as ye think not, but in such a manner as ye expect not, the Son of Man cometh.**

We conclude with this aphorism: History is the progressive realisation of the Immanent Kingdom of God, and the struggle of the people for Freedom in the common life is the most open vision of the Presence of God.

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#### IV.

### THE REDEMPTION OF PERSONALITY.

In the light of the Divine Immanence we have the ground and spiritual basis for the most exalted type of personality. If it is the Truth that the Father is eternally present in the being of every one of us, unescapably present, the very life of our life, and the reality of our existence, the light of all our seeing, awaiting a complete recognition, realisation, and expression, then, indeed, when this Truth begins to take hold of the deeps of consciousness, we may expect

to see the release of the most God-anointed personalities, and eventually a spiritual awakening such as history has never known.

**When Jesus said, "I and my Father are one," and "he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father," He was revealing not only what God is but what man is.**

### **1.—The Personal Experience of Jesus.**

The Divine Illumination received when the Holy Ghost came upon Him was to Him a revelation that the whole universe is now and here the presence of the One Eternal Intelligence—which He called the Father. Whatever were the guesses of ignorance, or the limitations of supposed intelligence, He perceived that there was no other Kingdom anywhere but the Kingdom of God, that there never had been nor never could be any other Absolute Reality to Nature, or History, or to the Individual Soul. **Since there was no Reality anywhere except the One Divine Presence, He perceived that there was really nothing else for Him to be than to be that.** "I can of my own self do nothing. Of my own self I am nothing. The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the work." And there could, therefore, be no Reality to any other human being except the same presence. The Kingdom of God was the All-ness of whatever really IS, and this Kingdom was manifested as one with His consciousness, and by this conscious unity Jesus became Christed, i.e., the Christ.

### **2.—The Divinity of Humanity.**

At this hour of divine vision He perceived that what He was all men were. He was the first-born among many brethren. He was divine; they were divine. He was the Father incarnate; they were also. His vision and illumination under the power of the Holy



Spirit was not particular, that is for Himself alone ; it was universal, that is, for all men. He perceived that the Father was no respecter of persons. This was the summit of His insight. Jesus was no spiritual aristocrat. He saw the democracy of the Divine Being, and the complete, original, enfranchisement of every human being in the heart of God. Thus He revealed the Truth. By the Truth we mean that which is utterly universal. The Truth cannot be private or personal, or limited to particular persons or times or places. The doctrine of the divinity of Christ is true, but it has been so taught in other ages of the world as to prove all other men un-divine. Jesus did not so teach. He was not concerned about emphasising *His* divinity, but in disclosing to them *their* divinity. This was His mission. His revelation of His divinity, His Oneness with the Father, in Power, Intelligence, and Love, was to Him a discovery of the universal significance of every human life. Jesus did not consider Himself as a privileged personality, as one having relationships with the Father from which others were excluded. **God was the Father of Jesus in no sense other than in the sense that He is your Father and my Father. The Father could be no more to Jesus than He is for you.** The ultimate significance of the Life of Jesus, culminating in conscious oneness with the Father, is the ultimate significance of our life, recovering us from the limitation of ignorance, and restoring us to true consciousness—divine in the only Reality that there is : The Kingdom of God.

Such I consider to be the meaning of the Divine Presence in personality. Here we have concretely dramatised in the Life of Jesus the quality of Life consequent on the divine anointing which reveals the consciousness as actually one with God. Now, such an interpretation of the significance of human life here and now, as thus dramatised and taught by Jesus, must eventually precipitate three tremendous forces

in Social Evolution. Here we have the dynamic of Social Revolution—not only that of to-day—but of centuries to come.

I shall have time only to mention these three and to offer slight comment on each.

### **3.—The New Type of Spiritual Teacher Appears.**

Such a perception is a call to us to duplicate in our conscious religious experience the divine anointing of the Spirit which was the supreme initiatory fact in the life of Jesus. We are called to be anointed ones, Christed ones to our generation. We are to be saved only as we are saviours. **We are to lay down our lives for the sheep, in the great needs of humanity of our day.** Our mission is identical with the mission of Jesus. There is not one quality of life for the master and another quality of life for the disciple. "He that said he abideth in Him, ought to walk even as He walked." Jesus said, "They are not of the world even as I am not of the world." "And as the Father sent Me even so send I you."

Nor is there one quality or condition of Salvation or unison with God for the Master and another condition for us. Truth is universal. We are to be Messianic to our times, witnessing to the Messianic Vision of the Kingdom of God, in the earth, filled with the Messianic power of the Spirit, and disclosing to those who see not the Messianic consciousness.

Thus we shall see the release of Christed personalities or a new type into the present surging current of modern society. **They will be inspired re-announcers of Truth. They will be apostles of freedom for the people. They will be the heralds of a new social order. They will lay down their lives for the sheep. They will count the cost and face whatever cross civilisation will**

**crucify them upon.** It is true that they will come with a new theology, but they will come primarily with a new quality of spiritual life, and a new social vision. And no matter to what extent we recognise the tremendous significance of titanic economic forces and mass movements in the re-making of the world, the message of the Kingdom of God, as taught by Jesus, gives a peculiar place of power and social potency to anointed empowered human souls. "Ye are the light of the world. Ye are the salt of the earth."

And the condition of this Christing of personality is exceedingly simple, and has held the same throughout the centuries, identical in every revival of religion, irrespective of the changes of theology, viz., an entire consecration, or dedication of the whole being, body, soul, and spirit, to be the organ or instrument of the Divine, of the Universal, of the Father in selfless service of humanity. The depth of that devotion, and the form of the service, change with the onward movement of the kingdom, but the conditions are simple and complete, and easily apprehended by the simplest soul, and place the emphasis in all the relations of the soul where Jesus placed it—that is, primarily in the Will, and secondarily and quite subordinately in the Intellect. If we will the good-will of the Father, we shall know the doctrine, and we shall become the attorneys for humanity.

#### **4.—The Great Social Revival at Hand.**

Such a divine enduement of persons here and there will eventually precipitate a great spiritual awakening. I look for the Religious Revival greater, deeper, saner, more wholesome, but none the less more intense, and irresistible than any in human history. This revival will call forth the moral and spiritual energies of the people **and concentrate that power on the labour of reconstructing our social and economic system according to**

**the programme of brotherhood and social justice.** This has never been attempted since the days of the apostles. Piety, religious emotion, and moral feeling, have been concentrated on the individual, and about the individual, to the neglect of the social body. **Not a less quality of divine life in the soul do we plead for, but a far greater.** And for the energy of these inspired hearts to be put forth, not in following the Capitalistic war, and aiding the beaten and wounded, but in stopping that war, and preventing this wholesale bruising of their fellows. **Our present type of conversion to Christ is perfectly at peace with the supreme anti-Christ of our times, the Capitalistic system.** The converts are enlightened about private vices and private virtues, but they have never heard of the public and social sins that are devouring the people. The sheep are being devoured, but the shepherds have not even seen the wolf. Therefore I say, a new Christian apostolate shall appear, heralding the Kingdom, and there shall appear a new type of convert—a convert with a social vision, a social prayer, and clothed with the power of God to abolish Capitalism and establish the Co-operative Commonwealth.

### 5.—The Real Test of Devotion.

This perception of the Divine Presence in all men will cover with halo as nothing else can do all the people about us, who are now by class forms, and education, and the curse of poverty, and the bitterness of Capitalism, practically outcasts, socially ostracised, and looked down upon. They are the presence of the Father, now—not after they are converted to any religion, or after they have joined any religious body—but now. Our burdened brothers, our tired and baffled sisters, our tens of thousands of little children, blighted in the Capitalist struggle, are now the Christ-



presence, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of one of these ye have done it unto Me," said the Master. **Our social and industrial treatment of men is the measure of our real devotion to the Christ.** Any praise-singing, and creed-repeating, and Sunday-worshipping standard of our devotion to Christ must be judged by the Judgment Jesus Himself offers. **Whatever man is reckoned to be in the market-place and in the factory, for the six days of the week, that is the mark of our real devotion to Christ.**

The Perception of the Kingdom of God as the only Reality of Life, and its disclosure in personal experience and in social and economic relation as our supreme Christian purpose—will mean to our age a devotion to the welfare of all the people, as the presence of the Father. **This devotion will break forth in a great spiritual awakening and Social Revival.** This Revival will exhibit itself first in personality—divinely anointed sons of God, whose only mission is the Father's Kingdom, and, second, in the Redemption of Nature—from the God of Mammon. **The Social Programme will be the Socialisation of the natural resources and productive equipment of society, for the use and happiness and freedom of the people.** This is the next great step to the Kingdom of God in the Earth.

## 6.—The Mission of Jesus.

Thus again, a glad message will be given to the poor people. The broken-spirited will be healed; deliverance will be preached to and realised by our social captives; social and economic intelligence will displace our blindness; and we shall set at liberty the people that are bruised.

# The Message of Jesus to Our Times.

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## I.

### A SUMMARY.

1.—The ultimate meaning of History is the coming of a state of Justice, Brotherhood, and Comradeship, which Jesus called the Kingdom of Heaven upon the Earth.

2.—The present Capitalist System is the Anti-Christ of our times—the social, political, and economic negation and antithesis of the Kingdom of God. Capitalism is Mammonism.

3.—The inevitable necessity forced by Capitalism upon the person to seek his private property ends in the cruel and unnecessary struggle of competition, crucifies the Christ-spirit, stifles the love-life of the soul, and tends to make all religion pharasaic, and less than the Truth and Love that make men free.

## II.

1.—Capitalism stands impeached as a system of legalised exploitation and plunder of the people, incarnating the Cain-spirit, though for a time still defended by many who historically bear the name of Christ.

2.—Capitalism denies the first fundamental right of human existence—that is, Equality of Opportunity in the use of the basic equipment of bread-getting—Economic equality.

3.—The Socialisation of the fundamental Equipment of Industry, the democratic organization and management of industry for the sake of use, instead of private ownership for private profit, is the economic form to which the Christ-spirit leads.

## III.

1.—The next great movement for Human Brotherhood and Social Righteousness will repudiate a Social System that uses human beings as mere creatures of private profit, absorbing their productive power to build up immeasurable private fortunes, while the workers themselves battle for bread and the opportunities of labour.

2.—We are to see to it that the limitless resources of Nature, which God gave to the people in usufruct, and the marvellous Mechanical Equipment of modern civilisation, and the titanic power of Industrial Organization, shall no longer be controlled by the few for mere private gain, but that these powers shall be used for the Life, the Labour, and the Liberty of the whole people. This is Socialism.

3.—If the church, by cowardly silence or open defence, continues longer to support and bulwark this unspeakably unjust and unbrotherly system, with its cruelties and antagonisms, and its refined, respectable and legalised plunder of the people, then will the church be adjudged Anti-Christ by the awakening Social Conscience and Soul of the People, and the Moral and Spiritual treasures of the race will find expression and conservation in other forms.

4.—From the present time on in our Cities and Nations, statesmanship must no longer consist in dramatic plays with organized plutocracy, but must be a use of the Powers of Government to Socialize all those Industrial Activities necessary to make men free from economic dependence; and to make Monopoly of Industry for ever impossible. This is Socialist Administration.

5.—What the People Socially need, the People must Socially own, in order to guarantee private property to the individual in the product of his toil. This is the programme for the Free Individual through Socially achieved Liberty.

J.S.W.

## THE MESSAGE OF SOCIALISM TO THE CHURCH.

A few weeks ago I was grateful to receive an invitation from the secretary of this Association to read you a paper on the "Message of Socialism to the Church."

The subject is, of course, too large for any adequate treatment in the time allotted. I shall, therefore, narrow my theme to appropriate limits, and even then I shall be able to give you but a suggestive outline upon the subject.

There might be many messages of Socialism to the Church, depending much on the point of emphasis in the mind of the Socialist delivering the message, and varying, perhaps, with the sect to which the message was given. One might insist that the clergy should devote more time and energy to changing the social environment of all the people, and less to the regeneration of the individual. Another might accuse the church of being in complicity with our industrial magnates, whose tyranny is becoming intolerable to the Working Class. Such messengers would see in the church the greatest bulwark to the present industrial wrongs, and in the clergy a sort of spiritual police force to guard in the name of



Christ the ill-gotten gains of trusts and monopolies. Some might declare that your individualistic interpretation of the ethics of Christianity gives moral sanction to the social tragedies of our day. These might accuse you of straining at gnats of individual error and swallowing camels of social injustice; preaching, for example, "Thou shalt not steal" to the child of the slum, who takes a hod of coal to warm his dying mother in the rear tenement, but "standing pat," as they say, with Standard Oil, or "Divine Right" Baer of Coal Trust fame. Others might attack your theological and metaphysical positions, or your interpretation of the evolution of society, as teachings tending to bind the people still more inextricably in their industrial chains, instead of making them free.

But whatever truth there might be in such messages I leave aside upon this occasion. I do not ask you to cease your activities to accomplish the spiritual regeneration of the individual. I do not ask you to change one syllable of your theology. I do not ask you to forsake your churches, your creeds, or your Christ. I take you upon your own grounds as professed disciples of Jesus and preachers of his message to the world, seeking to finish the work He has given you to perform, and on this ground I point out to you what I believe

to be your place in this great struggle.

**A Personal Word.**

Perhaps you will pardon a personal word just here, which may give a deeper significance to what I shall say unto you. Whatever differences there may exist in theology or ethical theory, or *modus operandi* between myself as a spiritual teacher and this body, I wish to assure you that I am consumed with the passion which inspires you, viz., the highest moral and spiritual welfare of humanity. But I wish to tell you that it was after one of the greatest spiritual and moral crises in my life that I became an aggressive Socialist. It was not thru a limitation but by an extension of moral vision and thru an increased spiritual anointing that the economic program of Socialism appeared to me as the social and industrial expression of what we may call on this occasion, the Kingdom of God in the earth. To put it more strongly: There came a time in my life when consent to live at peace with the present social order, without an active and intelligent protest, would have been to me moral suicide and spiritual eclipse; and the espousal of the Socialist cause was an inletting to a new world of spiritual significance, which becomes increasingly glorious and emancipating.

I therefore speak to you as one devoted to the highest immediate spiritual meaning to the individual life, on the one hand; and as an avowed Socialist, working with and for the class-conscious Socialist Movement, and voting for our candidates, and platforms. I may, therefore, speak to you with the utmost frankness and without insinuation.

#### **The Social Mission of the Church.**

Proceeding now to the message itself. Is Christianity a scheme simply to prepare mankind for another world? You answer me emphatically, "No." It is a message of life and of power to perfect the race here and everywhere; but here on the earth at least. Christianity then has a mission concerning human society. I ask a second question. Is this mission simply a reaction resulting from the presence of spiritualized characters in the world, or is it positive, definite, concrete, specific? Making my question plainer: Take three social problems. (1) Monarchical despotism; (2) the liquor traffic; (3) chattel slavery. I ask you, would your mission as preachers of the Kingdom of God on earth be at an end on these three great social questions, when you had converted certain thousands of church members to a certain inward state of mind called regeneration, letting that state of

mind react on these social problems, and leaving your followers uninstructed as to the concrete social program that would logically follow from their spiritual life and philosophy, or do you not deem it the business of the Christian clergy and of the church, also, to aggressively act as citizens of this world, using the political equipment of civilization to make an organized and definite effort in social programs? For example: to establish democracy and constitutional liberty and to overthrow despotism; or to effect legislation to lessen or abolish the liquor traffic. Or do you not think that it is in the scope of your mission, if chattel slavery still existed in America, to organize aggressively or to work with existing conditions, to defend chattel slavery from overthrow, if you believe it an institution planted of God for human good, or else to organize for the definite concrete purpose of abolishing slavery as a curse to humanity.

In other words, must not the Christian preacher ever reduce the principles of his faith to specific form on one side or the other of any great social problem before the civilized world? Must he not take his stand as a citizen of this world, using the pen and the press, the platform and the pulpit as instruments; and the ballot, the popular elections, the houses of legislature, and the acts of executives, as



agencies to bring to peaceful and successful issue great Social Movements, and thus to write into historical documents the coming of the Kingdom of God among men. Your inactivity or your silence will be interpreted by oppressors of men and the upholders of injustice as God's sanction to wrong.

When I have pointed out what I believe to be your duty in this respect, we should waste no time in contrasting the respective merits of these two phases of your duty,—phases which are not anthithetical but complementary, each supplementing and fulfilling the other. Let me remind you that I do not ask you to abate your efforts for individual regeneration, nor to modify in the least degree your interest in souls. I simply insist that if you *are* spiritualized characters yourselves, and if your church members *are* regenerated individuals, you are none the less citizens of this, our world, and your increased moral insight and Christian character should make you powerful to use the agencies of civiliaztion, and the legal equipment of civil society, for the triumph of great Social Movements that make for the happiness, freedom and upliftment of the whole people.

But further. As the professed spokesmen of Truth and Justice and Righteousness, as the expounders of the oracles of God, and as the

apostles of the gentle Christ who died for men, I charge you that wherever a great social wrong exists, which hurts and harms one of these little ones, which beats down and oppresses the sons of men, or which involves us as children of one brotherhood in strifes and antagonism, and needless struggle, or which limits the freedom, or harries the lives of the people—I charge you, as preachers of the Kingdom of God, that you must stand like men for that right, that emancipation, or whatever step, or practice, or system shall make men *free*. Aggressive, positive, constructive action, vigorous and determined, for the abolition of social wrongs and injustice, is the demand upon the pulpit today. No spineless, spasmodic effort will suffice, but the abandoned zeal and devotion of the saint, and if need be of the martyr. “As the Father hath sent me into the world, even so send I you,” said your Master, and He adds, “I lay down my life for the sheep.” We might say in this connection that no preacher, no church member who is not willing to lay down his life, if need be, for the cause of the people that needs assistance in his day can be called spiritualized, regenerated, or Christian. This is the essence of the Christ spirit, the very heart of the Christian conscience.

But perhaps we live in dull and uninspiring

days. If we only lived in the days when primitive Christians, hunted as the enemies of civilization, braved the brutalities of the Cæsars, then would we count not our lives dear unto ourselves. Or if we only lived in the dark hours of the middle ages, when men struggled for religious liberty against priestcraft, then would we face the fagot and the flame for the right of men to worship God according to the dictates of conscience. Or if, indeed, we lived but in the days of Sam Adams and Patrick Henry, how gladly would we have offered our lives on the altar of liberty. Or later still, a half century ago, devotedly could we have stood over the hunted slave and against his master, and hearing the cry of the slave woman under the lash, we would have borne her stripes.

But I say unto you, that never on the page of history has there been such a cause as that which is now upon us in this first quarter of the twentieth century. Never has so subtle a tyranny sought to establish itself over the lives and bodies and souls of men as that which grows to enormous proportions in our American life at this very moment. Never has there been a movement so fraught with possibilities of freedom and happiness and justice and brotherhood as the present Labor Movement. I do not hesitate to declare that no crisis in

human history ever held so much in the balance for the kingdom of God and the redemption of the world as the crisis thru which we are now passing. No problem has ever so forced the mind and heart of the race to the very roots of right relations between man and man as this Labor Problem. This problem demands of the clergy and the church whether the ethics of your christianity are mere Sunday pleasantries, and maxims of mere personal satisfaction and safety, or tremendous, far-reaching social principles which must be incorporated into the very basis of our social and economic institutions, or else become a hissing and a byword among the flesh-owners, and a forgotten dream by the beaten toilers of the world. *These are not dull and uninspiring days, but great days, demanding your most heroic service.*

#### **The Bread Problem Fundamental.**

Now I refuse to argue with you as to the respective merits or importance of the spiritual interests of men and of their material interests. I can grant you, if you please, any degree of superiority you may wish to give to the spiritual over the material interests. And then I will demand your consideration of the material interests that are still absolutely fundamental to human life. I will grant you that a man's



life does not consist in the abundance of things which he possesseth, but you must grant me that *he must have things*, nevertheless,—food, clothing, shelter,—after he has read your text to its utmost meaning. I will grant you that “man cannot live by bread alone,” but you must grant me that *he cannot live without bread*.

*Bread*—and all that is signified by that wonderful word in the form of human needs and comforts—we must have. But our bread does not fall as manna from heaven. In order to get that bread we must *labor*. And in order to labor we must have *access to the material resources of nature, and the mechanical equipment for labor*.

This struggle of men today for Bread, for Labor, and for access to the material resources whence that bread comes and to which that labor is applied—this struggle presents us with the great Labor Problem, which rocks civilization to its very foundation. From this struggle the church cannot escape. To its solution you are summoned.

Now Socialism confronts this awful struggle in the name of the Working Class. And I wish to hold your thought clearly to this one point, that Socialism is not any of the fifty things ignorant critics make it out to be. Socialism is a plain, unmistakable economic

program to be carried out by the Working Class thru political action, by the ballot-box and legislative enactment. Socialism presents an organized social movement and a social program to abolish the unnatural elements of this struggle and make men forever free from the tragedy of our bread-getting.

### Capitalism Condemned.

The battle for bread today is known in the science of Economics as the Competitive System, or Capitalism. Against this system, Socialism brings its criticism and condemnation. That criticism is at least three-fold. We declare that the present system is (1) unjust in its basis, (2) inhuman in its operation, and (3) tyrannous in its inevitable outcome. We shall consider these in the order given.

1. Our position is that it is *basically unjust* to open the resources and equipment of the bread and labor supply of the people as the prize in the financial game of frenzied financiers. To lay the whole resources of a people's livelihood open on the market to become the private property without limit to the winners, not only in a moderate business competition, but to industrial buccaneering and commercial brigandage,—to thus gamble with the bread supply and the chances to labor, and the opportunities of life, is to gamble with the

very souls and bodies of men.

As Socialists we ask the clergy to condemn the present *basis* of modern industry as unjust and inimical to the highest as well as the most immediate material interests of the people. We ask you to stand with the oppressed in this conflict and against the oppressor. We demand of you, as professed followers of your Master, who came to "set at liberty them that are bruised," that you stand against a system, which, assuming the disguise of legitimate business, in the language of Thos. Lawson, "has for years as boldly, as coarsely and as cruelly robbed the people as the coolie slaves are robbed by their masters."

Our criticism is that ownership by private individuals of the original elements and industrial equipment of civilization, and the operation of these resources for *private profit*, is unjust beyond powers of description. It will yet be seen in the light of intelligence and a truer ethical spirit to be an industrial basis inevitably producing an incalculable and unceasing robbery from the producing classes of the products of their labor. It is a social basis and an industrial mechanism that inevitably wrings uncounted millions from the children of toil and pours that wealth into the lap of those who never earned it.

Statistics show that already one per cent of

the families in America hold more of the results of labor than the remaining 99 per cent. One single corporation, according to one of its self-confessed accomplices, plundered the people of over one hundred millions (\$100,000,000) of dollars in the last five years!

Men of the Christian ministry, your Master said, "Every plant that my Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." Think you that a plant which bears such fruit is rooted in Justice and Righteousness? Nay, verily. We Socialists are tugging at the roots of that system of injustice and wrong. The capitalistic system is *unjust in its basis*. It stands without ethical defense. We ask you to tug at the roots of this great wrong with us, and abolish it.

2. Again, the Competitive System is *in-human and unchristian in its operation*. If our eyes are blinded by the sweat of the "strenuous" life; if we are still hypnotized by the modern ideals of "success," that bid the contestants climb to victory over the helpless victims that fall in the mad struggle; if our hearts are callous from long familiarity with the sights and sounds of the beaten and baffled ones that strew the highways of modern greed-getting; if our minds are more responsive to the Cain-spirit of the competitive struggle, that ruthlessly cries, "Am I my



brother's keeper?" than to the mind of the Master who said, "I lay down my life for the sheep,"—and if any of these are our dominant states of mind, then we cannot see the Socialist position that the present Capitalistic System is *inhuman in its operation*.

"By their fruits ye shall know them" is as true of social and economic systems as it is of individuals. You cannot gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles. Neither can you gather love, peace, mercy, tenderness, brotherly kindness,—in short, the human and Christ virtues—from the operations of a system that in its very basis provides for, and in its practice demands, the development and fruition of the very opposite passions of men.

Place the land, and the machinery, and all products of all toil, open to the mad gamble of private property seekers and exploiters of men for private profit; place the very bodies of men, women and little children as mere marketable commodities to be hired "whenever and wherever" the masters of the market shall dictate, to be paid "whatever compensation" the industrial monarchs shall choose; turn 80,000,000 of people loose in that struggle—a struggle from which there is no exemption, a struggle imposed by nature and necessity,—give us, I say, that kind of a basis for our bread-getting, and *inhumanity and cruelty in*

*that struggle is inevitable.*

The word Competition is an euphemism. It is a mild commercial term for strife, antagonism, unbrotherliness; for rivalry, jealousy, and hate. The Competitive System, operating on such a basis, with such prizes, is the open door and a colossal invitation and temptation to fraud and to dishonor; to the subtle but respectable grand larcenies of the market masquerading as legitimate enterprise; to the now almost sacred right of amassing fortunes of uncounted millions out of the very blood of toiling multitudes.

The Competitive System is a system that bears every fruit that is contrary to the mind and spirit of Jesus. Your Christ could not qualify in this struggle. His strenuousness was of a different type. His conception of success would invite to ignominious failure in this system. "Blessed are the merciful," said He. The Competitive System knows no mercy. Wherever Mercy shows her fair white brow it is to mitigate or ameliorate the pain and tragedy of our industrial strife. And if you point us to the lives of devoted Christians, and to their deeds of mercy and love, we respond that this is in defiance of the principles of the System, and the logic of such lives and such deeds must be to cease offering the millions of lives, which no individual

mercy can reach, to this merciless dragon of industry.

We Socialists, then, demand of the disciples of Jesus that you attack this Capitalist System, so cruelly inhuman, and unchristian in its operation. At least we demand of you, that if you refuse to struggle with us against it, *never to use the name of Jesus as an apology for the crimes of competitiveness*. We demand of you, that the oppressor shall not deal out to the Working Class a double curse in the exploitation of men, by carrying the profit-bag in one hand, and the Bible, the cross and the sacrament in the other. For it may be truly said that Capitalism is the only considerable anti-Christ of modern times. All the other great forms of public wrong that curse and blight us are either fathered or mothered or nourished by this one gigantic anti-Christ—the Competitive System.

Let me remind you, also, that the members of your flocks are unescapably involved in this inhuman and unchristian strife. Their individualistic piety grants them no release. The social system involves them in its meshes, either as agents or victims of its wrong, irrespective of their profession, their piety, or their prayers. In the battle for bread, life is reduced to the lowest common denominator, capable of measuring all without exception.

For once let us thank God, the pilgrim to the delectable mountains of spiritual safety cannot escape from this City of Destruction with *his* pack on *his* back to save *his* own soul. He is bound to the race with unbreakable social bonds. Every bite of bread he eats, every garment he wears, every coin that passes thru his hand, as the sacrament of our common humanity, is tainted with the poison of this system. And there is no spiritual inoculation that can render the church member or the clergy immune. They, too, are sinners with us in this social strife, and competitive war of man against man. And with us they must confess the social guilt, and expiate the social sin.

3. Our third count against Capitalism is that *it is inevitably tyrannous, and despotic in its outcome.*

Given the basis described in our first criticism; given the competitive struggle with the winners of the heavy prizes in the lead; and the out-generated and vanquished children of toil now left to fight one another as unionist and "scab" for the chances to labor—chances now in the hands of the winners; given this unjust basis and inhuman operation, and the climax is the most cruel, heartless and arrogant despotism that mankind has yet confronted.

The winners feel that they are "self-made."



They point the losers to the codes of business success, which have long since displaced the ethics of the Sermon on the Mount. They tell the 7,000,000 laborers, with an average annual wage of \$380, to "save," and they, too, shall become millionaires! There is always room at the top, you know. There is no social responsibility anywhere. Neither President Roosevelt and his cabinet, nor the dignitaries of the church, nor the Wall Street monarchs of trade, have any responsibility to see that the opportunities to make our living are open to the Working Class. The rule of the game is, "Every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost." This is the unconfessed but ill-concealed motto of the "strenuous life" as lived in the Competitive Struggle.

The winners have climbed to victory over prostrate humanity. And shall they deal out mercy when they have full control of the industrial situation? I trow not. Feudal lords and southern slave holders might be responsible for the health and safety of serfs or slaves, and here and there individual capitalists caught in the toils of Capitalism may transcend the system, and add a 10 per cent to wages, or shorten the hours of labor, or provide some extra benefit to an isolated group of laborers. But the tyranny of this system wraps itself about the Working Class like the coils of a

serpent. The system transcends the good will of individuals. It knows no individuals. It hears no cry of poverty or pain. It sees no human suffering. "Things are in the saddle and ride mankind." Steadily the game is played. Steadily the chains and shackles of an impersonal despot are placed on the ankles of the Working Class.

Describing the relation of the personal and impersonal factors in this tyranny, Lawson writes in his exposé of Standard Oil as follows: "These men (referring to just one group of Wall Street financiers) to whose eyes I have seen come the tears for others' sufferings, and whose voices I have heard grow husky in recounting the woes of their less fortunate brothers—these men under the spell of the brutal code of modern dollar making are converted into beasts of prey, and put to shame the denizens of the deep which devour their kind that they may live. In the harness of the 'system' these men knew no Sabbath, no God; they had no time to offer thanks, no care for earthly or celestial being; from their eyes no human power could squeeze a tear, no suffering wring a pang from their hearts. They were immune to every feeling known to God or man. They knew only *dollars*."

Such a paragraph gives a hint of the cruel and heartless tyranny and despotism of plutoc-

racy, which now sits enthroned in our American life, as the Competitive System comes to its climax.

Apostles of Christ, can you apologize for or defend a system which grows disgusting and deadly even to its votaries? We Socialists ask you as men who profess to teach the truth of Him who came to proclaim liberty to captives and to make men free, to attack this *plutocratic tyranny*. Stand, not for *mammon*, but for *men*. Plead the cause of the people. We invite the clergy and the church to join with us in overthrowing this subtle tyranny that is sapping the foundations of constitutional liberty, making Christianity a joke, and enslaving the working class under the specious promises and masks of "prosperity."

#### The Program of Socialism.

But Socialism comes not to destroy but to fulfill. In the darkness on the social horizon, Socialism alone holds up the beacon light to the Working Class, and thru them to the race. That beacon light of Socialism is the result of the most painstaking study of social and industrial life that has ever been given to the world.

Written all over the pages of modern society, so large that any eye looking for the Word of God may read, the Socialist sees that

Organization must take the place of the chaos and anarchy of competitive strife, and that Co-operation must supplant Competition. The Socialist sees that huge railroads, immense factories and our enormous industrial equipment must be owned by *vast aggregations and consolidations of capital*.

Socialism therefore declares that this huge industrial equipment can no longer be left with safety to mankind in the hands of Private Trusts and Monopolies, to be administered by groups of Capitalists, using the Co-operative principle and the mighty powers of Organization for Private Profit to themselves, and for the exploitation and enslavement of the producing classes.

The Socialist reads out of the agencies and activities of the present tyranny the truth that shall make us free. Socialism therefore declares that the people must proceed as rapidly as votes can be counted and law enacted to transfer the basic industrial equipment of the nation from private individuals and the Capitalist Class to the nation, to the people, to Social or Collective Ownership, to be organized democratically, and operated on the principle of Co-operation.

This Socialization of Industry is the only answer to the cry of labor. *It is the hope of*



*the world.* And if the Church only knew the day of her visitation, this Socialization of Industry, as rapidly as human energy and zeal and genius can accomplish it, is a veritable second coming of Christ. It is at least one divine event toward which the whole long past has moved. If the Church of America could be aroused from the hypnotic spell of a materialistic, mammonistic and plutocratic age, this plank of the Socialist movement—the Socialization of Industry—would sound like the call of God to go up and possess the land, and to “bring my people out of the house of bondage and out of the land of the oppressor.”

Our National platform states our proposals thus: (1) “The Socialist Party comes with the only proposition or program for intelligently and deliberately organizing the nation for the common good of all its citizens. It is the first time that the mind of man has ever been directed toward a conscious organization of society.

(2) Socialism means that all those things upon which the people in common depend shall by the people in common be owned and administered.

(3) Socialism means that the tools of employment shall belong to the creators and users, that all production shall be for the direct use of the producers, that the making

of goods for profit shall come to an end; that we shall be all workers together, and that all opportunities shall be open and equal to all men."

I do not hesitate to say that this is the only platform in America that has the purpose of Christ writ large in an economic program. Nor do I hesitate to say that this is the only platform that an apostle or a disciple of Christ can consistently vote for.

The message of Socialism to the church is therefore a summons to spurn all policies and platforms of parties defending and supporting the present system, and to vote for the Socialist movement, its platform and its candidates.

Right here I should correct two crude objections that ignorance and prejudice have raised against Socialism. First, it is said that we would attack private property. On the contrary, it is Capitalism that has left one-half of our population absolutely propertyless, which is attacking private property. It is in the interests of private property, the result of honest toil, for personal use and enjoyment, *but never for the exploitation of others*, that we demand the *social ownership of the means of production and distribution*.

This phase of the question is clearly treated in the National Platform of the Socialist Party in the two following paragraphs:

“Capitalism is the enemy and destroyer of essential private property. Its development is through the legalized confiscation of all that the labor of the working class produces, above its subsistence-wage. The private ownership of the means of employment grounds society in an economic slavery which renders intellectual and political tyranny inevitable.”

“Socialism comes so to organize industry and society that every individual shall be secure in that private property in the means of life upon which his liberty of being, thought and action depend. It comes to rescue the people from the fast increasing and successful assault of Capitalism upon the liberty of the individual.”

Second objection: It is claimed that we propose to take from the Capitalist Class by force what they have so ruthlessly secured by the schemes and practices and policies of this system. Concerning this objection I will quote to you from three of our standard authorities.

Kautsky, the noted German Socialist, of the most radical wing, says: “There are a number of reasons which indicate that a working class regime will seek the road of compensation and payment of the Capitalist Class in the Socialization of capitalist industry.”

And Engels, in 1894, wrote: “We do not

at all consider the indemnification of the proprietors as an impossibility, whatever may be the circumstances. How many times has not Karl Marx (the great authority) expressed to me the opinion that if we could buy up the whole crowd, it would really be the cheapest way of relieving ourselves of them."

"Expropriation without indemnity," says Vanderwelde, a leader in the Belgian Socialist movement, "with the resistance, the troubles, the bloody disturbances which it would not fail to produce, would be in the end the most costly."

#### **Program of Amelioration.**

Returning now to the program of the Socialist Party. If the proposition of the Socialization of Industry seems vague to men who are trained to deal with principles as well as with concrete practice, let me point you to the program of amelioration which Socialism presents to the Working Class under the present injustice and wrongs of Capitalism.

Here are some planks of amelioration which as keen men you will observe were not dictated by Wall Street politicians, but were read out of the sufferings and struggles of the Working Class in their unceasing conflict with Capitalism:

"To the end that the workers may seize



every possible advantage that may strengthen them to gain complete control of the powers of government, and thereby the sooner establish the Co-operative Commonwealth, the Socialist Party pledges itself to watch and work in both the economic and the political struggle for each successive immediate interest of the working class:

1. For shortened days of labor and increase of wages.

2. For the insurance of workers against accident, sickness and lack of employment.

3. For pensions for aged and exhausted workers.

4. For the public ownership of the means of transportation, communication and exchange.

5. For the graduated taxation of incomes, inheritances, franchises and land values, the proceeds to be applied to the public employment and improvement of the conditions of the workers.

6. For the complete education of children and their freedom from the workshop.

7. For the equal suffrage of men and women.

8. For the prevention of the use of the military against labor in the settlement of strikes.

9. For the free administration of justice.

10. For popular government, including initiative, referendum, proportional representa-

tion, equal suffrage and municipal home rule, and the recall of officers by their constituents.

11. And for every gain or advantage for the workers that may be wrested from the capitalist system, and that may relieve the suffering and strengthen the hands of labor. We lay upon every man elected to any executive or legislative office the first duty of striving to procure whatever is for the workers' most immediate interest, and for whatever will lessen the economic and political powers of the capitalist, and increase the like powers of the worker.

12. But, in so doing, we are using these remedial measures as means to the one great end of the Co-operative Commonwealth. Such measures of relief as we may be able to force from Capitalism are but a preparation of the workers to seize the whole powers of government, in order that they may thereby lay hold of the whole system of industry, and thus come into their rightful inheritance."

I challenge the moral and spiritual teachers of America to duplicate the Socialist Platform in any other platform ever written in American politics. Here is a philanthropy that is not the price of blood. Here is a humanitarianism that smacks not of vainglorious charity. If the church really means to abolish the

sufferings of mankind, here is a program before you which we could not dishonor by even comparing it with that of any other political party.

The effect of the Socialist Movement, even in its minority, is thus exalted by one of our opponents and critics, Max Nordau. After speaking of the dreams and absurdities in the Socialist propaganda, he says: "Whatever is absurd in Socialism will remain an empty word, and will be either interpreted as symbolical or simply allowed to drop into oblivion. It will, however, act as an impulse and force, and bring about better conditions of life among mankind. This one can safely prophesy; for, in spite of its theoretical absurdity, Socialism has already in thirty years wrought greater ameliorations than all the wisdom of statesmen and philosophers of thousands of years." Surely this from a critic is a remarkable tribute, and if the mere propaganda of Socialism, with occasional political triumphs, has already had such a powerful effect in ameliorating the conditions of the Working Class, what may we expect when the Sleeping Giant of Labor arises and inaugurates the full program of human emancipation!

That noble American woman, Frances Willard, declared her faith in Socialism before her death, and in her terse and beautiful language

states the spiritual significance of our movement in the following words:

"I believe that COMPETITION IS DOOMED. WHAT THE SOCIAISTS DESIRE IS THAT THE CORPORATION OF HUMANITY SHOULD CONTROL ALL PRODUCTION.

"Beloved comrades, this is the frictionless way; it is the higher way; it eliminates the motive for a selfish life; it enacts into our everyday living the ethics of Christ's gospel. *Nothing else will do it*; nothing else can bring the glad day of universal brotherhood. THE REASON WHY I AM A SOCIALIST IS JUST HERE.

"Oh, that I were young again, and it would have my life! It is God's way out of the wilderness and into the promised land. It is the very marrow and fatness of Christ's gospel. It is Christianity applied."

I have but outlined the Socialist criticism of Capitalism, and presented with but little elaboration the Socialist program of emancipation of the workers and of the race.

In conclusion, I do not ask you, as ministers of Christ to abate your efforts for individual salvation in the smallest degree. I do not attack your theology, nor your ethics, nor philosophy. But I charge you to see that the quality of individual salvation shall be that of Jesus rather than that of Judas; that professed spirituality of character and discipleship to



Christ either on the part of yourselves or your adherents shall not be found bulwarking, either by open defense, or by that silence which gives consent, either by your voice or your vote, a system which stands as the supreme *Anti-Christ of modern civilization*.

I charge you, in the name of humanity, to dedicate your talents and your lives to the social and economic freedom of mankind thru the establishment of the Co-operative Commonwealth.

Methinks that if the gentle but mighty Carpenter of Judea were with us on earth in this great crisis, he would be found not with the oppressor, but with the oppressed, ready again to lay down his life for the sheep, to work with the agencies at hand to establish this next step of the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Justice and Brotherhood in the Earth.

Let his apostles and disciples follow!

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The first edition of this pamphlet was quickly exhausted. The sixteenth thousand is now off the press. At the close of this second edition I wish to state again some convictions of my heart:

The only meaning of human history is the coming of a state of justice, brotherhood and human comradeship, which Jesus called the Kingdom of Heaven upon the earth.

The quality of life which was manifest in

Jesus of Nazareth is the ultimate quality of life for the individual. It is the goal of moral and spiritual evolution for the person.

The essence of that quality of life is the spirit of absolute self-renunciation on the altar of the human life of the whole—the de-personalization of the ego-life, and the incarnation of the social mind and social conscience and cosmic spirit.

This quality of life is not mere religiousness, nor sentimentality, but is the love-life, the comrade-life, the escape from the nightmare of selfishness, consequent on the highest philosophical perception of the Unity of Being, the actual Solidarity of Humanity, and the Nothing-ness of the merely limited ego-life.

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The present capitalist system is the Anti-Christ of our times—the present social, political and economic negation and antithesis of the Kingdom of God.

The Capitalist system is Anti-Christ to the individual, functioning firmly the personal, private, limited, ego, self-life, in the pursuit of private personal ends.

This inevitable necessity forced by Capitalism on the human individual to seek his private property ends in the cruel and unnecessary struggle for existence, crucifies the Christ-life, stifles the love-life of the soul, and makes all

religion a pharasaism—a Caiaphas to Herod.

The Capitalist system stands impeached by the highest spiritual insight of the race, as a system of legalized plunder of the people, incarnating the Cain-spirit, and for a time still unconsciously defended by those who historically bear the name of Christ.

Capitalism denies the first fundamental right of human existence—that is, equality of opportunity in the use of the basic equipment of bread-getting—economic equality.

Capitalism, therefore, by forcing men to antagonism and strife, victory and defeat, monopoly and poverty, in bread-getting, denies to men the last highest joy of existence—comradeship, fellowship, brotherhood, love.

But the Christ mission cannot be realized except by the overthrow of Capitalism and the inauguration of Capitalism.

And the Christ mind and spirit cannot function in defenders of Capitalism, but will find its incarnation in a new race of spiritual heroes—a new Messianic movement—which is already at hand.

The call of the cross today is to the hero-soul of the Christ-consciousness in the individual to incarnate protest against the Capitalist system, and to incarnate the concept and spirit of the democratic organization of industry—the next step of the Kingdom of God in the earth—the Socialist Commonwealth—J. S. W.





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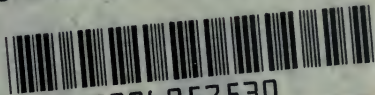
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